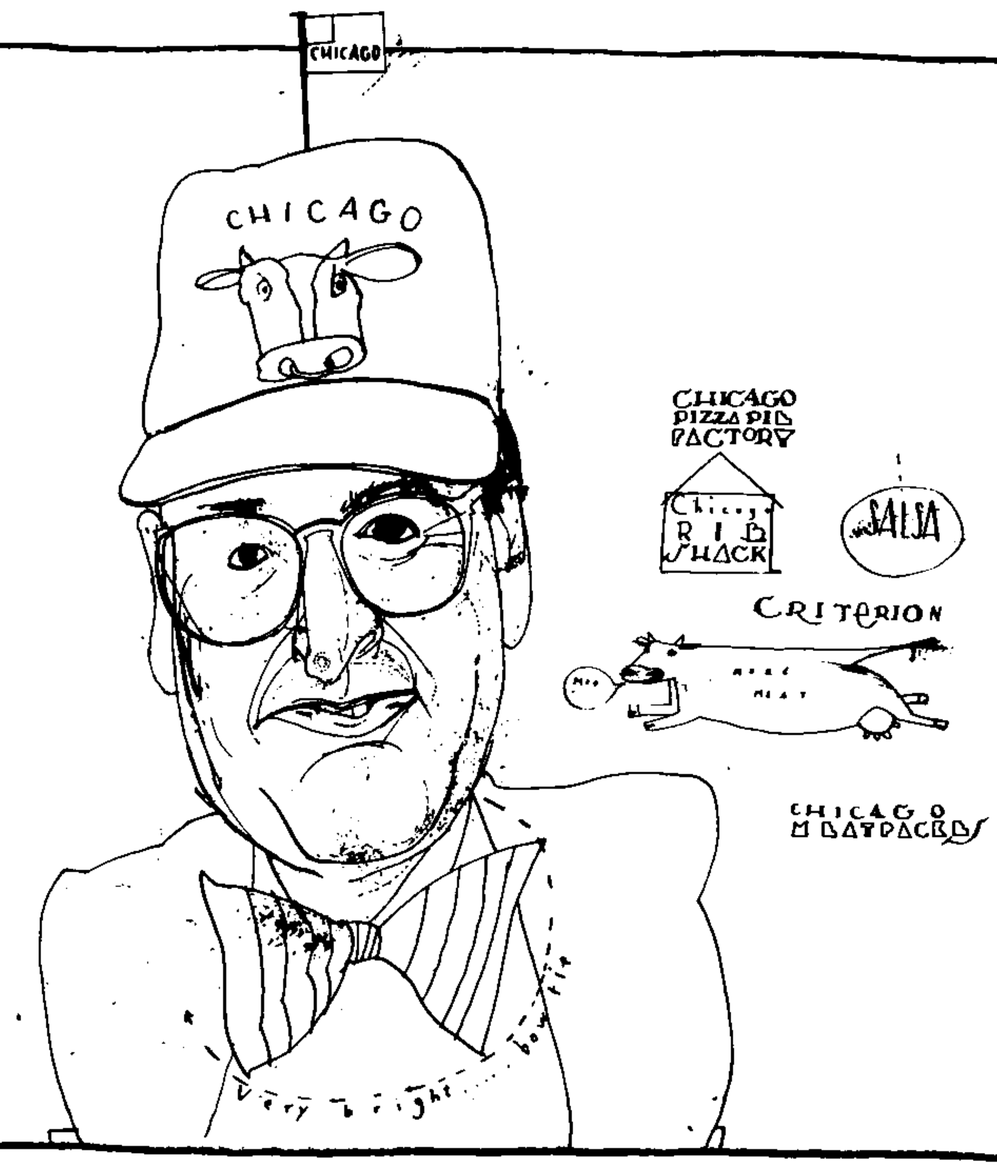
No. 827
Friday
27 Aug. '93

# PRIVATISE

90p

# BR SELL OFF
## Latest

# LIKE To CONSIDER MYSeLF A HOSPITALITY IMPRESARIO.

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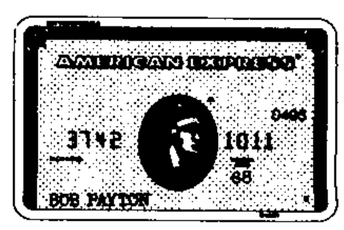


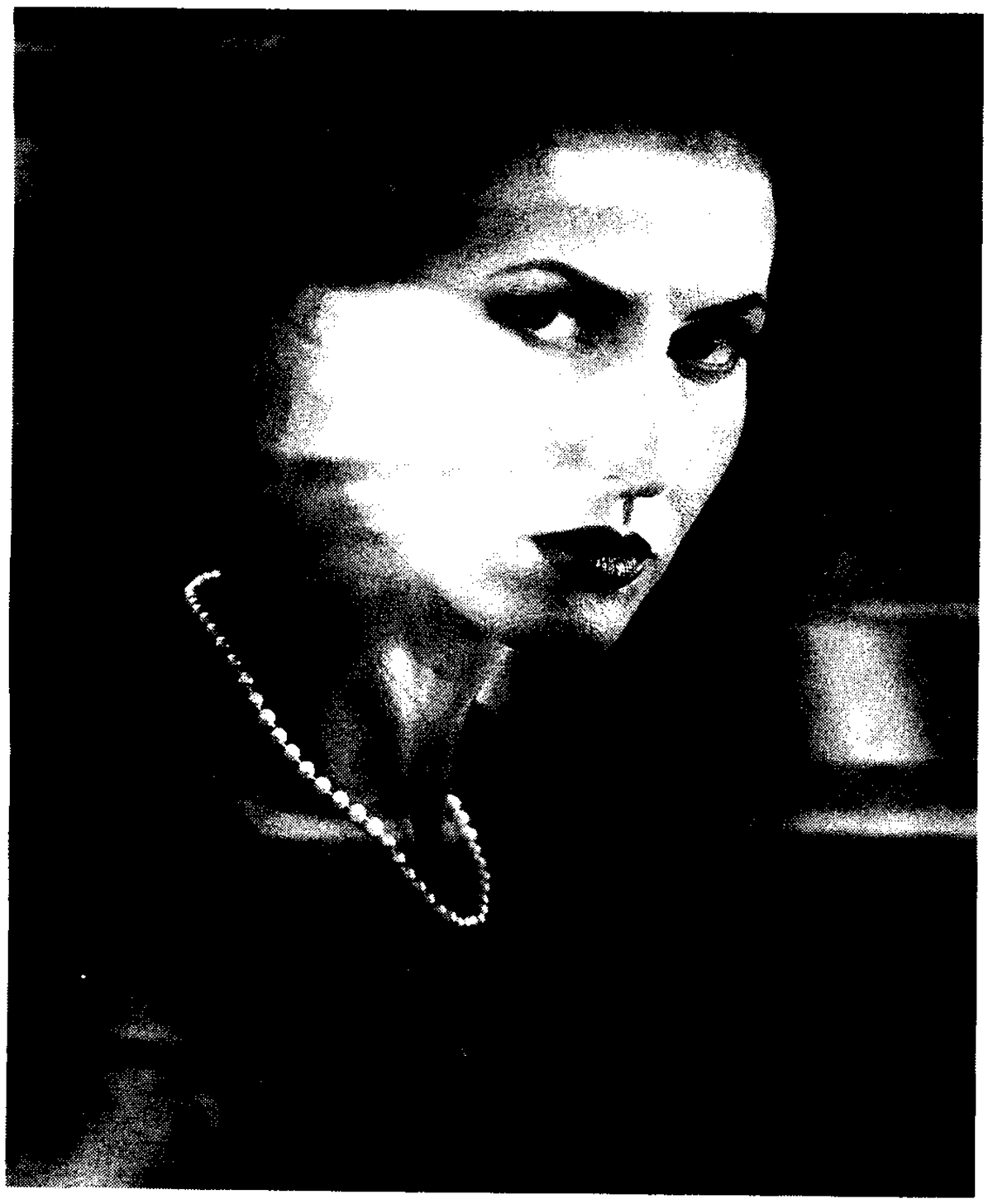

SHE HAS A TOY BOY, TRAVELS ON CONCORDE AND KEEPS A SUITE AT THE ROYALTON. SHE TOOK THE FERRARI AND LEFT ME THE LINN HI-FI. NOW SHE SEES AN ANALYST TWICE A WEEK.

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# Gnome

THE SERIALISATION of the new biography of Lord Reith in my newspaper has created an enormous sensation. People are even suggesting that I deliberately bought the rights to the biography in order to pursue some agenda of my own.

Nothing could be further from the truth. "Lord Reith — What a Poof!" is a serious study of the life and career of the man who made the BBC what it is today. My decision to run extracts from the book came from a desire to help the nation fully understand this giant of public service broadcasting. Sadly, due to pressure of space, the *Sunday Gnomes* could only reprint the chapter on Reith's friendship with a young man called Bertie Woofter. The writer claimed that "there is no conclusive evidence that this passionate friendship was other than platonic", and the sub-editor (after a brief phone call from me) captured the essence of the situation perfectly in his heading "Typical BBC Arse Bandit Lecturing The Rest Of Us About Morality".

The decision to run the story on the front page of the newspaper under the strap "Pommie Pooftah Special", merely reflects the seriousness with which the *Sunday Gnomes* treats stories about the media. There is no possible connection, except in the minds of the unworthy, between a reappraisal of the man who gave the industry the adjective "Reithian" and the media conglomerate Gnome International, owners of the television stations GnomeSat 1, GnomeSat 2, UK Gnome, Gnome Movies, Gnome Sweet Gnome, and many others too terrible to watch *(shurely 'numerous to mention'? E.S.).*

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
Gnome International
Rupert's Court
Murdockland
London E94

SAVE MONEY! — by subscribing — see page 35.

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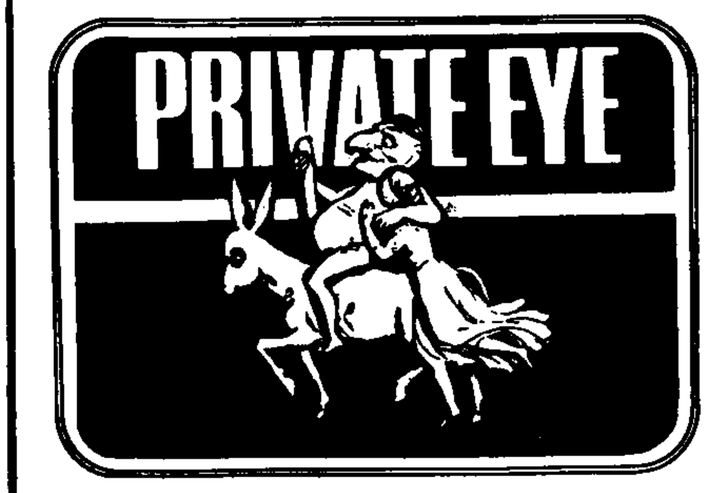


# COLOUR SECTION

**THE rescue of "little Irma" was a triumph for the Prime Minister's PR machine. Major's concern for the victims of Bosnia has surprised UN refugee workers in the area.**

They recall a conference on Yugoslav refugees in Geneva on July 16 attended by 40 countries, including Britain. Desperate pleas were made for hospital beds for the sick and wounded of Bosnia, but there was little or no response.

The British representative summed up the feelings of most of the countries present when he said that there were not enough hospital beds for the injured and sick in Britain, let alone for the injured and sick of Bosnia.

The "deep concern" of the British government can also be measured by the following figures for Balkan refugees in Europe, given to the House of Commons in the debate on Yugoslavia on July 26.

Half a million refugees have found their way out of the stricken areas. 300,000 are in Germany, 80,000 in Switzerland, 73,000 in Austria, 40,000 in Hungary.

In Britain there are 4,424.

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**BRITAIN'S generosity to Bosnian children only applies so long as they are severely injured and featured on our TV screens, it seems.**

At the same time as "Operation Irma" got under way, plainclothes police began swamping city centre streets in Bradford — to arrest Bosnian refugee children who had been begging in the West Yorkshire city.

A warmhearted Inspector Knacker explained that the children, some as young as eight, didn't understand that begging is illegal in Britain. Now they've been told.

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**THE amazing decision of Mr Robert Sheldon, Labour MP for Ashton- under-Lyne, not to publish the National Audit Office report on the Al Yamamah arms deal with Saudi Arabia is said to be connected to the very high "commissions" paid with the contract. How high? At last, a rough idea can be gleaned from the Department of Trade Inspectors recent report on Astra, which reveals the following:**

In July 1985, Unwin Pyrotechnic Ltd signed a £729,305 contract for the supply of mortar fire simulators to the Nigerian Minister of Defence. How did that £729,305 break down?

- The cost to UPL of producing and exporting the simulators was £66,305.
- The profit to UPL was £313,000.
- The commissions paid were £350,000.

On this basis, commissions on such contracts can be estimated at roughly five times the total cost of producing and exporting the arms.

**PS.** UPL was a wholly-owned subsidiary of Richard Unwin International, among the directors of which at the time were the following very important people:

- Admiral Sir Derek Empson.
- Vice Admiral Sir Ian Hogg.
- Sir Anthony Kershaw, then Tory MP for Stroud.
- Gerald Howarth, then Tory MP for Cannock and Burntwood, later an independent consultant in the private office of Lady Thatcher, and now chosen as candidate for Aldershot.

**PPS.** The firm's founder, Richard Unwin, is now the charge d'affaires for the Solomon Islands mission to the EC. When the Solomon Islands consulate in Britain needs appropriate transport, they are inclined to borrow Mr Unwin's Rolls-Royce Corniche.

**PPPS.** Mr Unwin is a friend and associate of Stephan Adolf Kock, the mysterious gun-slinging director of Astra whose connections to a company which funds the Tory party were disclosed in the last *Eye*.

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***EYE* readers of long memory will remember the many pieces about the fire on the oil rig Ocean Odyssey in 1988, in which the radio operator died (after being sent back onto the blazing rig from the safety of the lifeboat). Great was the complacency of the company concerned, Odeco, and the ridicule from Odeco executives for the *Eye* articles.**

Now, five years after the fire, the case has at last come to court. For a catalogue of incompetencies, inability to maintain equipment and basic contempt for the most elementary safety precautions, Odeco were fined £250,000.

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**THERE was a brief fuss earlier this month when it was discovered that David Mellor was being employed as a consultant by Shandwick, a PR company acting for the Rank organisation.**

With the benefit of Mellor's advice, via Shandwick, Rank is applying to run the National Lottery — the selfsame lottery that Mellor, while in the Cabinet, was instrumental in creating. A fellow Tory MP, John Blackburn, said he was "alarmed that just 12 months after being at the centre of planning the lottery, he is now deploying his former position for commercial purposes".

But it now seems that Mellor is not the only person wearing more than one hat.

Under the National Lottery Bill, the Arts Council will be responsible for dishing out the lottery proceeds to the arts. And who do we find sitting on the Arts Council's governing board? Why, Peter Gummer, who as well as being brother of the more famous John "*drittsekk*" Gummer, is also the chairman of Shandwick.

---

**DELIGHTED with the permission from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to go on coining fantastic profits from their monopoly, the directors of British Gas have got down to serious business.**

Even the big spenders at the MCC have been taken aback by British Gas's decision to take out an eight-year lease on a box at Lords.

The cost (a snip for any monopolist) is £410,000.

The next critical issue is for British Gas is whether to buy a pair of tickets for every day at next year's Wimbledon Centre Court — a bagatelle at £11,000.

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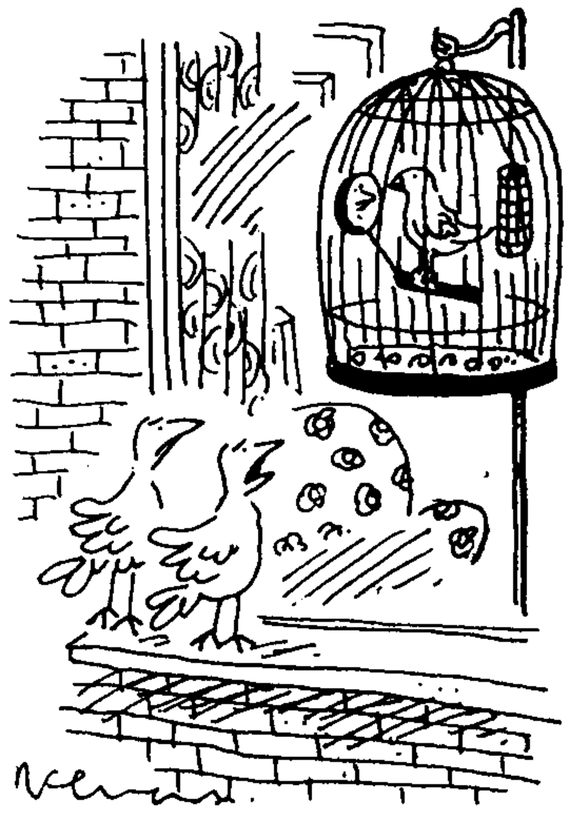


*"Well, it looks bloody cushy to me"*

# STREET of SHAME

## The Sun

**LAST WEEK a recently released ex-prisoner turned up at Wapping, hoping to sell the *Sun* some photos he had taken of jailed fraudster Darius Guppy. The snapshots were of such pisspoor quality that even the *Sun* rejected them. Undaunted, the old lag then took the pictures to the *News of the Screws*'s royal-watcher and toff-expert Clive Goodman, who agreed to show them to his newsdesk. While Goodman did so, the former jailbird smartly nicked his wallet.**

Such crimes are becoming distressingly common at Wapping, as crooks galore attempt to enrich themselves at the Dirty Digger's expense. Three weeks ago another ex-convict, who was also roaming the building in an attempt to sell his story, wandered into the lavatory — where he espied *News of the Screws* executive Stuart Kuttner standing at the urinals; he promptly grabbed a mobile phone from Kuttner's pocket and sped away. It was only after a chase down four flights of stairs that the miscreant was apprehended.

Perhaps he should sell the story of his daring deed to the *Sun*.

## Daily Mirror

**HACKS AT THE *Mirror* have been treated to a fine example of the "honourable and decent" philosophy of employee relations outlined by MGN chief executive David Montgomery before a Commons select committee last month.**

*Sunday Mirror* assistant editor Brendan Parsons wanted to have a word with the paper's art editor, Anne Rowe, and summoned her imperiously to his presence. Rowe said she would be with him in a moment, when she'd finished what she was doing. This wasn't soon enough for Parsons, unaffectionately nicknamed "Damien" after the evil child in *The Omen*, who shouted that he wanted her to drop everything and come at once. When Rowe didn't immediately snap to attention and run panting to his side, Damien strode across the room, grabbed the startled hackette by her long blonde hair and dragged her over to his desk.

After disentangling herself from her boss's grasp, Rowe went home in distress and told her boyfriend what had happened. He arrived at the Holborn House of Horror too late to drive a stake through Damien's heart: the monster had departed on holiday. All this took place, fittingly enough, on Friday the 13th.

In Damien's absence, *Mirror* chiefs have been putting pressure on Rowe to forget about the incident. Kicking up a fuss, it is implied, could be bad for her career at the new, dynamic, meritocratic, non-sexist *Mirror*.

**FOR MANY years the *Daily Mirror* had advocated the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland, a policy it traditionally reiterates every August. This year, however, the paper has been coyly silent on the subject. Instead, it has quietly agreed to sponsor a "Democracy Now" fringe meeting at next month's Labour Party conference.**

Democracy Now is a small coterie within the Labour Party, described in a recent BBC report as "a campaign to challenge Labour's long-established policy of seeking a united Ireland". By supporting the meeting, the *Mirror* appears to be flying in the face of its previous editorial line.

The hand of David "Rommel" Montgomery, a staunch unionist from Bangor, may be at work here. As the *Eye* revealed recently, when Montgomery worked as a sub-editor in the *Mirror*'s Manchester office during the 1970s, he was sacked for inserting unionist bias into reports from the paper's Belfast correspondent. More recently, while editing *Today*, he ran a vitriolic "Don't Buy the *Mirror*" campaign in protest at its attitude to Ulster.

## OBSERVER

***OBSERVER* hack David Rose has sprung loyally to the defence of the much-vilified new regime at the paper. In an article for the *Evening Standard* on 11 August, he argued that under Donald Trelford's editorship the paper was soulless, corrupt and dead — "a product in which the best ideas were absent, left out in favour of the predictable and the dull".**

Under the new *Grauniad*-appointed editor, Rose argued, all that has changed. The *Observer* is "now blessed with an editorial freedom that is absolutely unconstrained", and is "visibly sharper than it has been for years... its news stories are being taken seriously and followed up as well. It is Fleet Street's dotty, peripheral maiden aunt no longer."

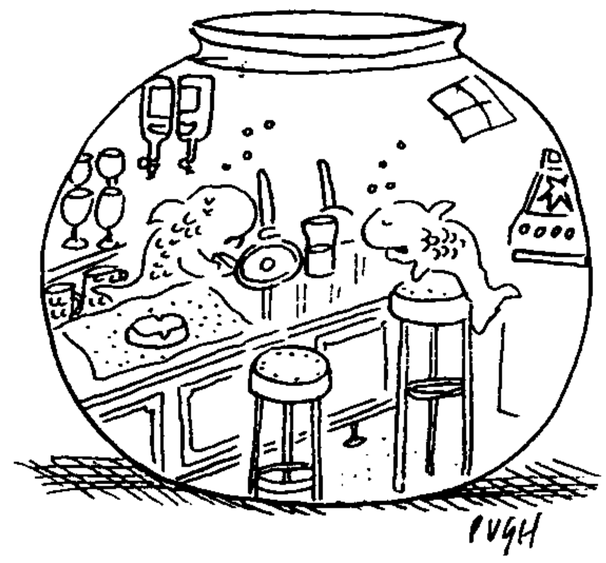
Some of Rose's colleagues were mildly surprised by this energetic display of arslikhan to his new bosses. For, rummaging in an office filing cabinet recently, they came across a letter he wrote on 4 May this year to Donald Trelford, the man whose editorship he now rubbishes. "I do want," Rose told Trelford, "to place on record my dismay at what looks like emerging received opinion — that under your editorship the *Observer* has been a hopeless failure... My time working at the *Observer* for you has been the happiest and most fulfilling period of my career: I have no doubt I will look back on it in years to come as something of a golden era. Thanks to your lead, my stories have been given space, projection and support, sometimes in circumstances where this required courage." He even proposed writing an article praising Trelford's achievements: "The *Observer* as sick man of Fleet Street is a myth that needs scotching *now*."

Hacks — don'tcha love 'em?

**"PIONEER Lean goes freelance", claimed the *UK Press Gazette* recently. It explained that Geoffrey Lean, the *Observer*'s pioneering environment correspondent, is leaving after 16 years on the paper and is looking to the rival *Indescribablyboring on Sunday* for a job.**

What the *UK Press Gazette* did not mention was a slight disciplinary matter following Lean's dastardly treatment of a female colleague, health correspondent Polly Ghazi. Lean took a call from one of Ghazi's regular contacts and gave the impression that she was unavailable to do the story and that he would write it instead.

When Ghazi discovered what had happened she complained to editor Jonathan Fenby, who decided to dispense with Lean's services.




*"Quiet again tonight..."*

## THE INDEPENDENT

**A RARE scoop enlivened the Sleepy Hollow of the *Indescribablyboring*'s front page last Monday. "Human organs infected with a rare and fatal brain disease," revealed the paper's indescribablybumptious investigative hack, Tim Kelsey, "are believed to have been used in the production of a growth hormone which has put the lives of nearly 2,000 young adults at risk, the *Independent* has learnt." The *Indie* was so proud of its story that it repeated it on the following day's front page, boasting of "the disclosure in the *Independent* yesterday".**

Kelsey claimed that his discovery was the result of an "investigation". Had he bothered to investigate the contents of the *Indie*'s cuttings library, he would have found that the whole tale had been carried by *Today* and the *Guardian* more than a year ago. Kelsey's main "revelation" — that morticians took pituitary glands from infected corpses — was also the subject of a *Checkout* programme on Channel 4 in June 1992, which included interviews with several morticians. Their confessions were subsequently reported in many newspapers, but not by the *Independent* — which was, presumably, too busy conducting its own "investigation".

## Daily Express

**ANOTHER tale of excessive zeal comes from the dreary corridors of the *Daily Express*, where the clean desk policy (the cleaners are instructed to chuck away anything left lying around on desks) has reached new depths of silliness.**

Each desk has a black plastic basket, a sort of in/out/pending tray, and last week cleaners were instructed to dispose of anything sticking up above the top of the baskets.

So, associate city editor Julia Finch arrived at the Southwark showpiece to find that the top cover and the first 100 or so pages of her dictionary had been ripped out and thrown away — leaving a neat and regulation size pile in her basket. Look out for spelling errors in words beginning with anything from a to about the middle f's.

**OVER in Dublin the High Court has been hearing a complicated case involving control of the Irish Press group of newspapers, founded by the late Eamon De Valera. Members of his family are in dispute with Ralph Ingersoll, a recent American investor in the newspapers.**

The group has suffered major circulation losses in recent years, partly due to competition from Tony O'Reilly's Independent group and his joint venture with Lord Stevens of Ludgate, chairman of Express Newspapers in London.

The court was told that, as part of a recovery plan, Ingersoll outlined changes in finance and personnel. Sean Ward, a former editor of the *Evening Press*, revealed in evidence that he'd attended a meeting last year in Dublin's Regal Inn at which Ingersoll identified the three people who, he claimed, would be helping him in developing the papers: a hack from *La Repubblica* in Italy, a former editor of the *Irish Times* — and Eve Pollard, editor of the London *Sunday Express*.

There must shurely be shome mishtake here. La Bollard's employer, Lord Stevens, would hardly permit her to act as a consultant to one of his business rivals. And, of course, she would not take on the work without getting his permission.

# Grovel

**THE last issue of the *Eye* arrived in the South of France just in time to spoil the holiday of Sir Christopher "Pigling" Bland, in perhaps the most sumptuous of his many sumptuous houses.**

**"Pigling" was playing host to Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and his wife, both of whom have been tremendously impressed by the enormous amount of money for nothing (about £7m — see last *Eye*) which "Pigling" and his fellow bosses at London Weekend Television have just made for themselves by means of one of the greediest share option schemes ever devised.**

IT IS gratifying to see that Lord "Two Dinners" Goodman's memoirs, *Tell Them I'm On My Way*, have been serialised in the *Observer*, the paper with which he has been associated as trustee, director and fat friend since the late 1960s.

In the book Goodmanzee makes the pontifical claim that he only ever once threatened to resign from the *Observer*, although ex-editor Donald Trelford recalls numerous occasions when such a threat was made.

Last November Goodmanzee decided to withdraw the serialisation of his memoirs from the *Observer* in a lather of indignation over the paper's advance publication of some raunchy snaps from Madonna's wretched *Sex* book. His publishers, Chapmans, started offering his memoirs for sale to other newspapers, but alas none was interested. Goodmanzee had to swallow his pride and go back to Trelford.

I HEAR that Michael Winner's latest movie starlet, Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neil, was so excited by his screen debut in Winner's new film *Dirty Weekend* that he arranged for the *Sunset Times* to sponsor a special preview of the film at the Glasgow Film Theatre on 16 September. All the social elite of Scotland were invited to witness Brillo's moment of celluloid immortality.

But now, alas, this glittering occasion will not take place. "I'm afraid there's nothing we can say," a woman at the cinema told the *Eye*. "We were just told that it was cancelled, but given no reason. I think you should talk to that man who edits the *Sunday Times*, Andrew Thingummy — what's his name?"

Andrew Thingummy, who has a cameo role in the film, was regrettably unavailable for comment. But one theory is that he cancelled the premiere because of a last-minute fear that many of his guests might walk out in protest after watching the first few scenes of *Dirty Weekend*, a sexploitation movie which is well up to Winner's usual standards of tastefulness.

It may also have occurred to Neill, rather belatedly, that for the past year his paper has been campaigning loudly against Hollywood's love of sex and violence — and that to sponsor the preview of a lurid Michael Winner movie about a female serial killer might not seem entirely consistent with this high-minded crusade.

● *I COULDN'T help noticing that the Sun's Bizarre column by Piers Morgan recently carried a huge puff for the nightclub king Peter Stringfellow under the heading "PETER SELLS NEW YORK STRINGFELLOWS TO CLEAR £2M DEBT".*

*The item suggested that Stringfellow was selling his New York girlie club "for around £4 million". Stringfellow, who is a chum of Morgan's, was quoted as saying: "I've decided to get out while I'm still on top... I've been given a good offer and it seems like a good time to sell up. I need to invest in my new London club and pay off any debts in America."*

*My sources, however, suggest a different scenario. Stringfellow's club in New York was put into Chapter 11 (similar to administrative receivership here) and has been clearing its previous debts. Stringfellow was outmanoeuvred by his partner, Michael J. Peters. I understand that Stringfellow, who is believed to have sold out for $200,000 (not £4 million), is furious about having been forced out.*

**NEWS reaches me as the Thatcherites gleefully gear up for their heroine's Autumn Offensive that "Sir" Charles Powell, her private secretary for foreign affairs and defence from 1984 to 1990, has been cashing in on her "good" name.**

**After climbing out of the Downing Street bunker in 1991, Powell became an Executive Director of Matheson and Co Ltd. That year the company gave £10,000 to the Tory party.**

**Other appointments followed, but 1992 saw his most ill-advised directorship, with Tiphook plc, the container and freight company whose share price has plummeted amid allegations of controversial accounting methods. Last year Tiphook plc donated £40,000 to the Conservative Party.**

**Three months ago Powell joined the board of another Tory funder — construction giant Trafalgar House plc, who hired Mark Thatcher as a consultant in the 1980s.**

**But Powell's most fascinating appointment, the *Eye* can reveal, is as a Trustee of the Karim Rida Said Foundation, a charity chaired by Wafic Said — Syrian financier, close associate of Mark Thatcher and an agent on the Al Yamamah arms deal. Its purpose is "to promote and encourage education in the Arab world". In 1991, the Trust's investments at market value were $4,839,530.**

**This intriguing Wafic connection reinforces the Thatcher/Powell/Said troika which includes members of their families.**

I HEAR that Katharine Hamnett, the right-on Eighties T-shirt designer, has chosen as her latest toyboy one Rupert Darwall, the right-wing, twentysomething, former special adviser to Norman Lamont.

On the weekend following Lamont's resignation (and Darwall's own sacking), the *Sunday Times* carried a piece by Darwall, who is also a merchant banker, lamenting the political demise of his boss and his replacement by left-wing Tory Kenneth Clarke.

He described it as "a body blow to the right wing of the Tory party", and regretted that the departure of Lamont spelt greater intervention by government, an end to the supply-side reforms of the Eighties, and the loss of an opportunity to "take an axe to the welfare state". I can imagine the expressions of horror on the faces of Ms Hamnett's dinner party guests when Darwall offers his Thatcherite analysis of recent political history.

Perhaps we are witnessing the start of a new political trend, with liberal career women choosing right-wing Tories as their partners. Sue Douglas, associate editor of the *Sunday Times*, has always described her politics as "left-of-centre", but the father of her soon-to-be-born child is Niall Ferguson, a twentysomething Oxford historian who has written right-wing features for the *Daily Mail* and *Sunday Telegraph*. Perhaps the style section could come up with one of its exciting new acronyms? Ideas welcome.

# Pip Pip!

**WORLD POPULATION EXPLOSION (2)**

To Tony Rushton and Anne Marie Goldring a daughter, Rosie Zillah Perpetua, on 22.8.93.

# Pseuds Corner

**When I look at the book (*No More Sex War*) now, I wonder at the explosive energy I was given in those weeks and at the blazing rage I contained. Some chapters read as if somebody else had written them, somebody I faintly know. This feeling reminds me of a line I once heard that Ralph Vaughan Williams said after a recital of one of his works: "I'm not sure that I like it, but it is what I meant to say."**

**It still is. The arguments I assembled and the case I advanced have survived the most pharisaical twisting and battering directed against any book or author in my memory.**

**NEIL LYNDON**
**Independent**

*In Japan in 1979, Sadhus was delivered, a child of his time, largely by his father, on a hill on the island of Kyushu. Raga became friends with three other western women married to Japanese, and with them had an experience that led her to adopt the surname Woods. "They were taking down a wood to build a golf course, so we went to the woods and held a ritual. I took some of my menstrual blood on a rag and we did readings and wept. We could hear the chainsaws in the background. I guess that was when I committed myself to environmental work."*

**Interview with Twyford Downs protester RAGA WOODS**
**Independent**

Samuel Beckett's sentences are so beautiful they almost make the thought of our last full stop intolerable. After "the panting syllable that rimes with breath", we won't be able to read them any more. Their polyphonic horror at the monotony of consciousness is the supreme technical refinement of literary modernism.

**MARTIN CROPPER**
**Sunday Times**

But in the strange dockland cottages where *The Big Breakfast*'s arcane rituals of eventlessness take place there is neither up nor down, there is only the loop, the grunge and the disturbing calm behind the black frames of Chris Evans's glasses. What *The Big Breakfast* has done is to take one aspect of low-intensity television — its poverty of content — to its logical conclusion by extirpating all content.

**BRYAN APPLEYARD**
**Independent**

**Middle Class Weekend Workshop, led by Sean Ruth, May 14th-16th at Wick, near Bristol**

Sean took a completely positive attitude. He used the word "significant" about middle class people at least twenty times. He invited us to own our identity and claim our membership.

Middle class is not just a bundle of distresses. We have the ability to model total respect. As a class we have been oppressed and have the right to liberation.

**Oxfordshire North and West Co-Counselling Community Newsletter**

*CONTRIBUTORS: E. Strobes, I.K. Williams, Everyone, R. Boon, S. Partridge.*

**£10 paid for entries**

HP SAUCE

**BUILDING materials firm Bardon, where Sir Peter Parker is chairman, does not support the Tory party financially. It supports the Tory party chairman, Sir Norman Fowler, by paying him £25,000 a year as a part-time director and giving him the right (*Eye* 818) to buy 78,000 Bardon shares in the future at a rock-bottom price, just as if he had worked for Bardon as an executive all his life.**

Fowler's share options have risen usefully in value over the past fortnight. There is not, of course, and never has been any connection between payments made by companies to Tory party funds and the number of titles dished out to company bosses in Honours lists. Even so, if Sir Peter Parker were to become a lord, quite a number of other firms might be interested in taking the Tory party chairman on their payroll.

**MOST politicians find they can scrape along by being economical with the truth, but poor John MacGregor, the Transport Secretary, is now having to lie to maintain any credibility.**

On Radio 4's *The World at One* on August 3 he said, "My objective is to get more traffic on to rail not road." This is patently untrue, as regular *Eye* readers will realise. We know MacGregor has not suddenly had a change of heart: two days later he was back on Radio 4 (*Today* programme) saying how he was preparing to streamline the planning process for new roads because "99 per cent of the population", including himself, want billions of pounds to be spent on improving the roads.

MacGregor's tenure has seen investment in British Rail's existing network reach its *lowest ever*. Regional Railways has become so hard-pressed it cannot even afford to maintain many of its rail tracks. The UK rolling stock manufacturers are on the verge of shutting down, because MacGregor has halted BR's programmes of new trains. Meanwhile, MacGregor forges ahead with "the biggest road programme since the Romans" (to quote former Transport secretary Paul Channon): £20 billion to be spent upgrading the road network over 15 years.

Road transport is about the only area which has not seen reductions in public spending under this Government; the costs of the road system (including the costs of accidents) are said to exceed revenue from road taxes by £6 billion. Market forces have not been brought to bear on cars and lorries, making them increasingly cheaper than railways, where market pricing is everything.

**FEARFUL of losing their seats as a result of the great rail privatisation shambles, Tory MPs in commuter areas are imploring the government to take the easy way out by accepting the House of Lords amendment to the crazy privatisation bill.**

The amendment effectively destroys the bill by allowing BR to bid for the new franchises. (BR would win nearly all of them.) An important supporter of the Lords amendment has now emerged, in the form of the new chairman of the transport select committee, Paul Channon, who happens, like Lord Peyton, the mover of the amendment, to be another ex-Minister of transport.

The Tory whips — who chose Channon as chairman of the transport committee because he bore no resemblance to his predecessor, train buff Adley — have been dismayed to find that Channon does not suffer from rail privatisation mania. Channon presumably realises that, after what befell Adley's ultra-safe seat at Christchurch (Tory majority 23,015), his own seat at Southend (Tory majority 11,902) might not withstand the privatisation fiasco.

Two other seemingly solid Tory seats, Enfield East and Wokingham, are held by two of the only three important people who still support the railway (destruction) bill. The MP for Enfield East is the over-rated Michael Portillo, who dreamed up franchising when he was a junior minister at transport, while John Redwood, who sits for Wokingham, conceived an intense dislike of railways when he ran the No. 10 policy unit.

The gods may yet stand up for these two (of Major's three) bastards, who are busily strengthening his resolve. Their ally, Sarah Hogg, present head of the policy unit, is the only other prominent Tory who still believes in the crazy rail bill.

**SOME Tory MPs are apparently supporting rail privatisation proposals in which they don't have complete faith.**

Stephen Milligan, MP for Eastleigh, wrote to a constituent: "We shall need to review after the first limited round of franchises what the experience has been... If it has failed, we need to remedy the deficiencies or to abandon privatisation altogether".

Fair enough, but should he be voting for legislation which he thinks could conceivably waste millions of pounds of public money as well as cause irreparable damage to patronage of such enormous undertakings as Network SouthEast's south-western division and the main lines from London to Edinburgh and London to South Wales and the West?

Meanwhile, Public Transport Minister Roger Freeman has said it would be necessary to find successful examples of franchising before the next general election in order to confound public scepticism. Even he is therefore admitting that not all franchises will necessarily be successful.

*"It's from the Tory Party"*

**RUPERT Allason, the pudgy-faced Conservative Member for Torbay who had the parliamentary whip withdrawn for being absent from Westminster for the no-confidence vote in July, has recently sued the *Grauniad* for libel.**

They settled almost immediately after a "Pass Notes" feature ill-advisedly repeated libellous remarks about the MP — who also writes espionage stories under the pseudonym Nigel West — by Chapman Pincher and Joe Haines (he had already won £225,000 from the *Daily Mirror* over Haines's pronouncements).

While West has always had his critics, the observations of one genuine expert have not until now been widely known. In 1991 Allason/West published a potboiler book about espionage called *Seven Spies Who Changed the World*.

This contained several chapters which provided glosses on old stories, but one in particular, about the U-2 spy plane pilot Gary Powers, has been almost totally, though not yet publicly, discredited. Dino Brugioni, the CIA man who planned the various U-2 operations, is scathing in his estimation of West/Allason.

"He takes existing works and embellishes them. I know where he got the information and how he embellished it, the books he used — it'd all been published before. He claimed the U-2 was made of plastic and plywood. I think the last plywood airplane was the Mosquito bomber in World War Two. In reconnaissance and photo-interpretation, West is an amateur."

Unfortunately for Allason/West, Brugioni was asked to assess the U-2 chapter by Random House, the US publishing house which was considering buying the US rights to *Seven Spies*. He counted 25 errors and consequently Random House decided not to acquire the book.

**THE POLITICAL career of 21-year-old Damien Sansom has taken another mysterious turn.**

Sansom, as *Eye* readers will recall, is an eager young Tory who was sent down to Christchurch to help run the party's doomed campaign in the recent by-election. A week before polling day, however, he left Christchurch suddenly — and apparently in some distress — after a late-night visit to his hotel room by a Conservative politician.

He then went to Rutland to take up his new post as full-time agent to the local Tory MP, fun-loving Alan Duncan. Less than a month after starting work, he has now made another sudden departure, resigning his post and returning to his native Scotland. "Everything was perfectly amicable", Duncan has assured his local paper.

What can it all mean?

## MPs FOR HIRE

PART 12 AND FINAL EDITION : THE FOOD LOBBY

**Graham Bright** *Luton South*: Chairman and Director of Cumberland Foods Ltd, Chairman and Director of Dietary Foods Ltd, Adviser to Safeway Food Stores Ltd.

**Dame Peggy Fenner** *Medway*: Parliamentary and Legislative Consultant to British Frozen Food Federation (includes a lunch in the House of Commons!).

**Sir Marcus Fox** *Shipley*: Director of Yorkshire Food Group plc.

**Barry Legg** *Milton Keynes South West*: Consultant to Hillsdown Holdinos plc.

**Tim Sainsbury** *Hove*: Shareholder of J Sainsbury plc.

**Richard Shepherd** *Aldridge-Brownhills*: Director of Partridges of Sloane Street Ltd, Director of Shepherd Foods (London) Ltd.

**Michael Shersby** *Uxbridge*: Adviser to the Sugar Bureau.

**Sir Teddy Taylor** *Southend East*: Director of Shepherd Foods (London) Ltd.

**John Watts** *Slough*: Consultant to Rank Hovis McDougall plc (RHM).

That's the end of *MPs FOR HIRE*, folks. Apologies to any MPs we have omitted in this series.

### Sir Peter Blaker

WE published an article captioned "Blaker's Dozen — or thereabouts" in *Private Eye* of 20th July 1990. We suggested that Sir Peter, who was then a Member of Parliament, had infringed the House of Commons Rules in respect of registering his business interests in the Parliamentary Register of Members' Interests. We are now satisfied that this was not the case and apologise for suggesting otherwise.

# NOOKS and CORNERS

**THERE would Britain be without Knighted Architects, who add such lustre to our social and artistic life? Arise then Sir Norman Foster and Sir Richard Rogers, those partisans of High Technology and scourges of a stuffy, hidebound Establishment.**

It is that Golden Boy from Manchester, Sir Norman Foster, who interests me now. I have commented before on how he can do no wrong. Whatever he tackles is a work of genius — countless hacks tell us so. And beautiful women flock to his side, notably his second wife and fellow Mancunian, the former Mrs Andrew Knight — that doughty freedom fighter and scourge of disrespectful Customs officer (interesting that during her abortive law suit, the courtroom was packed out with staff from Foster's office, under orders...). Now, with the Empress of India in command, Sir Norman is as grand socially as he is supreme architecturally.

A few jobs get away, unfortunately. And, largely owing to the supreme incompetence of British Rail, the King's Cross Redevelopment looks a non-starter. It was interesting how Our Norman got that job as "Masterplanner". Foster was originally in a team of architects under the American firm, Skidmore Owings & Merrill, before his name suddenly "emerged" on its own as the developer's favourite (and SOM were dissuaded from making a formal complaint to the RIBA). Now I mention this because of what is going on in Glasgow, as history may be repeating itself (the second time as farce?).

Up in Scotland, old enemies — Glasgow and Edinburgh and their respective ex-Mancunian cultural supremos, Julian and Tim — slog it out: this time the prize being the proposed National Gallery of Scottish Art. Glasgow's bid was the old Sheriff's Court, a handsome Classical building in the city centre which was to be cleverly rebuilt internally by the local firm of architects, Page & Park. But this was not smart or glamorous enough for the smooth executives of the Glasgow Development Agency, who wanted a big name. So enter Sir Norman, together with Terry Farrell (to make it look as if it were a genuine competition) to design a second Burrell in Kelvingrove Park. And Foster produces a design: a dinky little sweep of glass and steel, which makes everyone gasp with wonder, despite the fact that it would be totally inappropriate for works of art.

But now the GDA has realised the Kelvingrove Park was always a non-starter and that the city centre site has every planning and economic advantage. But they do not want to let go of Glittering Norman. So what, apparently, are they thinking of doing? Asking Foster to prepare a scheme for the Sheriff Court, displacing poor Page & Park. This surely cannot be true. The GDA is a public body charged with dispensing public money to assist the regeneration of Glasgow. To think that the answer is to wheel in a fashionable knighted Englishman rather than to use local talent does not just expose the mediocrity of its outlook; in the city that produced Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Greek Thomson, it is treason.

***MEANWHILE, what of Sir Richard Rogers? Readers of the*** *Architects' Journal*, ***that now pathetic victim of Robert Maxwell, were recently treated to a long boring "clarification" about the bronzed and relaxed knight and a letter to the Editor which had been published back in January 1992. This was from Mira Bar-Hillel and referred to the way in which architects' names emerged in the competition to redevelop Paternoster Square (yawn, yawn). You would think that when you are as fashionable and successful and rich as Sir Richard Rogers you could treat the carpings of mere journalists with the contempt they deserve. But no: our knighted architects are curiously sensitive to the slightest criticism — I wonder why?***

***So, in September 1992, Rogers' solicitors decided that La Bar-Hillel's letter implied that Sir Richard had behaved improperly and sued both her and the AJ. The case was settled in July, with not a penny in damages and no statement in open court, although the magazine agreed to pay a portion of Rogers' considerable legal costs. In view of the settlement over the Prime Minister and his cook, which gave Mr Major £1001 in damages but no statement in court and no further apology — which the*** *New Statesman* ***could describe as a "victory" — what can this mean?***

***The most odious aspect of this affair is the way in which a rich knighted architect attempted to silence a defenceless freelance journalist by suing her personally. Such is chivalry.***

*'Piloti'*

**GORDON BROWN, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, last week published a "strategy document" promising that Labour would in future drop its policy of "high tax, high spend" and adopt instead the idea of "invest and grow". It was a policy, said *The Times*, which "strikingly resembles that of the government". It was Mr Brown's second attack on this front.**

He has just completed a successful campaign to censor a leaflet by two backbench MPs who thought that they might put a little muscle into the opposition.

Dr Roger Berry, an economist, and Peter Hain wrote a pamphlet called Labour and the Economy, and proudly submitted it to the Tribune Group, of which they are both members. That was a bad mistake because the group, which started life as the voice of Bevanite protest, has been diluted: on the principle that if you can't beat 'em, join 'em, the party's right-wingers have become Tribune-ites. Even Brown himself is a member and he (and his "adviser", one Ed Richards) set out to rubbish the pamphlet and succeeded in gutting it.

Berry/Hain were forced to agree to sweeping changes if it was to be published by the Tribune Group.

A passage denouncing a monetarist approach to unemployment is present in the original version and deleted from the authorised version. So is the statement that monetarism has been "seductive, not only outside but also inside the Labour Party". Also out is a demand to put full employment "at the top of the political agenda".

Also deleted is a demand for "a radical change in economic policy".

Plans for a National Investment Bank to buy shares and "alter the whole relationship between loan finance and industry" are deleted. The original version said "macro-economic policy seems to be the economic issue that dare not speak its name". That was 100 per cent right, in a way the authors did not intend: it was taken out of the pamphlet.

Kindly references to Keynes, and to things he "correctly pointed out" disappeared because supporting Keynes might imply we could spend our way out of depression and that would enable the Tories to ask where the money was to come from.

The result is a bowdlerised pamphlet calculated to cause no embarrassment to the Brownies on the Opposition front bench — and to make little impact on a public wondering what the opposition has to offer.

**NO MORE appropriate appointment has been made by the Major government than that of Keith Best, the former Tory MP for Ynys Mon (Anglesey), as chairman of the immigration appeals advisory service.**

Not long after his election, after an evening meal with his secretary at the Merrick Arms, Bodorgan, the MP drove his car into the back of a furniture van. His secretary died instantly. Mr Best was taken to hospital. He was not breathalysed. Magistrates dismissed a careless driving charge against him. Asked much later whether he had had anything to drink with his meal on the fatal evening, he replied: "I can't remember".

During the privatisation of British Telecom he improperly filled in a large number of share applications, was convicted, sent to prison for four months, and released by an uncharacteristically lenient Court of Appeal after four days in Brixton.

Anxious to improve the lot of prisoners, he formed Prisoners Abroad. The organisation forged close links with the Foreign Office and resolved not to criticise the government publicly.

When Fair Trials Abroad was set up to campaign against government failure to protest against unfair trials in other countries, Best and his organisation instantly disassociated themselves. "The policies and campaigning nature of Fair Trials Abroad", he wrote, "are at odds with the charitable status of Prisoners Abroad."

No quality is more important for the chairman of the immigration appeals advisory service than independence from government.

*'Backbiter'*

## O·B·N·K

Lady Thatcher, like all surviving prime ministers the world round, believes she is a national and international asset. With her, unlike most of the others, this happens to be true. She has ability, brains, experience, friends and political nous... Conservative managers give prayerful thanks that she, unlike her predecessor, took the self-denying path out of common politics.

*ALASTAIR BURNET*
*Sunday Times*

*Submitted by William Lawton.*

***£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.***

# EYE TV

## The New BBC1 Autumn Season

(BBC1)

**ONE OF THE consequences of the Thatcher / Major property slump has been the phenomenon of "gazundering", in which, just when the vendor believes that a deal has been completed at the agreed price, the purchaser suddenly lowers the amount they are offering. The vendor is left with a painful choice between loss of money and loss of deal. The purchaser experiences the thrills of economy and masochism combined.**

The Major administration is clearly impressed by this new wheeze it has helped to inspire, for it has just gazundered the BBC. By the efforts of Checkland, Hussey and Birt, the corporation's finances have been squeezed and its staff reduced in cringing deference to the desires of the government which these men have been so desperate to impress.

The viewer may have noticed the effect of these economies in summer schedules crammed with repeats on a scale which, unlike the programmes, has never been seen before, but which, like the programmes, we are now going to see again and again. The attitude of the viewer, though, is irrelevant. The government was impressed by the BBC's financial readjustments and highly and publicly praised the new regime.

And what is Hussey and Birt's reward for playing Tory poodle? Sources close to Peter Brooke, the minister responsible for television, deliberately let it be known in the press last week that the BBC has been so successful in cutting costs that the licence fee will probably be reduced. This gazundering, this punishment, is further vindication for the Eighties wag who described Tory economics as "sado-monetarism". Prove you can get by on less and you will be asked to get by on even less.

That, however, is merely one of the two Catch-22s on which Tory policy towards the BBC now rests. The other one works as follows: The more the BBC competes with ITV for ratings, the less its distinctive non-commercial programming justifies its distinctive non-commercial funding (ie, the licence fee). But, the lower the BBC's share of the viewing public falls, the less it can justify a funding system which levies money from the whole of the viewing public.

This unenviable paradox was brought to mind again by the unveiling of the new BBC1 autumn season, released to the press recently and trailed on-air in a ten minute BBC1 programme last Friday night. His short honeymoon over, it is here that new channel Controller Alan Yentob begins to earn his £100,000 a year — or not.

*"...all the details to tonight's programmes are in the Radio Times from May 1973, with Rodney Bewes on the cover..."*

The big autumn drama offering is Stendahl's *Le Rouge et Le Noir*. A typical BBC highbrow costume whopper, the serial sits rather oddly with new Head of Drama Charles Denton's assertion that the BBC will compete with ITV drama shot for shot. This will earn Yentob critical Brownie-points, but is unlikely to deliver busloads of viewers. It doesn't even have much sex to bounce them in. As a Stephen Sondheim character, planning a seduction through literary allusion, sings: "And Stendahl would ruin/the plan of attack/'cause there isn't much blue in/The Red And The Black". By naming the series *Scarlet And Black*, Yentob can at least hope that enough viewers think it to be a cop-duo show to boost the opening figures.

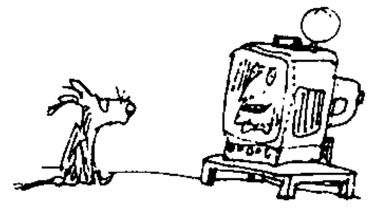
But other drama in the schedules shows the uneasiness of the BBC's understanding of whether it is going up or down market for viewers. *Harry*, starring Michael Elphick as a grouchy old soak running a Northern news agency, is a shameless recreation of Elphick's ITV vehicle *Boon*.

*Between The Lines* — a literate, clever and unusual police series praised by Square Eyes passim as a perfect example of drama which ITV could never have attempted — has been permitted a second series, but with stern warnings that the eight million viewers it gathered last time (a figure now depressingly regarded as paltry by the corporation) will not be tolerated now. And *Casualty* — a topical, political, risky series of the utmost distinctiveness — also returns, but with a mandate to tailor itself to a family audience.

So is the BBC looking up for view-ers or down? That depends on which executive you listen to (Up, say Birt and Forgan. Down, say Yentob and Denton). This is partly a product of management incoherence, but more a result of the government's willingness to gazunder the BBC after it fulfils its half of ideological deals.

Two of the new programmes for which BBC1 has the highest hopes will, if they work, be somewhat double-edged successes. One is *Thatcher — The Downing Street Years*, the four-hour Maggie-ography and book-plug, and the other is *If You See God Tell Him*, a Marshall & Renwick sit-com about a brain-damaged man ruined by the viewing of too many commercials. These two series neatly encapsulate the modern phenomena — Thatcherism and commercial-driven TV — between which Yentob and his channel find themselves squeezed.

*'Square Eyes'*



# MEDIA NEWS

**QUITE reasonably the Murdoch press has been to the fore in criticising the high percentage of repeats on BBC television during this most intemperate of summers. As usual, the *Sunset Times*' satellite groupie Jonathan Miller has led the anti-Beeb pack into battle.**

However, a glance at the brochure for Sky's new multi-channels package, which Miller has praised so lavishly, is sadly disappointing. Leaving aside Sky Movies and Movies Plus, which show films first seen in the cinema two years before and available to rent on video a year ago, Sky Movies Gold offers films first shown on television as far back as the 1950s.

UK Gold "shows classic programmes", Bravo "presents twelve hours of classic timewarp television every day", VH1 is for you "if you grew up in the classic days of rock and pop" and Nick at Nite "is dedicated to the preservation of television's heritage and has turned classic TV into an artform" (the latter comment appears to be a reference to the Dick van Dyke Show).

Leaving aside the "classics" on Sky One, Sky News and the rest, that's a lot of repeats for £16.99 a month (with another three quid on top for the sports channel).

Obviously, one way to improve the service would be for BSkyB to order more of its own programming, for example by using up all that spare capacity in the British film industry and commissioning some full-length original movies. But, of course, BSkyB is, curiously, the only UK television company exempted by Act of Parliament from meeting any such requirement. Perhaps the *Sunset Times* could launch one of its famous campaigns to bring its satellite sister into line with the rest of the industry.

**ANYONE working for the BBC's World Service Television (WSTV) who has felt uneasy since Rupert Murdoch bought a majority chunk of Hong Kong satellite TV company Star last month can rest easy.**

WSTV provides a news service to Star, and insiders are worried they will be caught in the usual slipstream of a Murdoch deal — losing their jobs, losing their editorial independence, or being merged with another Murdoch jewel, in this case, Sky.

But WSTV executive director Chris Irwin harbours no such fears, as he proved in an interview broadcast by BBC World Service radio's Eastern Service earlier this month.

When asked whether Murdoch "would uphold the BBC's traditional values", Irwin loyally replied of his brand new boss: "Mr Murdoch has always been willing to stand up for what he sees as free information in the face of attempts by politicians and others to control it.

"I think that he has reflected an integrity to his own editorial values, and... he is someone who has... been prepared to ensure that they are not interfered with." That should reassure everyone at WSTV.

CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"THATCHER WANTED TO DESTROY THE BBC...
WHY?...
BECAUSE SHE SAID WE WERE WASTING LICENCE PAYERS' MONEY...
EDINBURGH TV FESTIVAL
BUT SHE WAS KICKED OUT...
AND WE WERE SAVED!...
TO THROW £100,000 OF LICENCE PAYERS' MONEY AT HER"
"Treble plugs For her book all round!"
AUTUMN SCHEDULES
Thatcher: The Downing Street Years
Ken Pyne

## I-BSkyB

*BSkyB leads the way in wall-to-wall football coverage this season.* **Peter Ball** *reports.*

*The Times*

On Sundays, in particular, viewers are likely to be spoilt for choice. If you... have paid the new Sky fee of £11.99 a month to receive the Sky Sports channel...

*PETER BALL*
*The Times*

Sky undoubtedly have the strongest hand.

*PETER BALL*
*The Times*

*CONTRIBUTORS: Andrew Rowson, 'Porkpie'.*

*An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.*

**WHETHER they're football crazy, or just barking mad, the hacks at the** *News of the World* **have dropped a Wapping clanger over the merits of showing soccer on TV during August.**

In the *Screws'* TV guide of 8 August, Phil Tusler made BBC1's *Match of the Day* his "When to do the Ironing" slot. His not-unreasonable view was: "Surely we can do without football in the middle of August. This is sporty overkill at its worst."

But, adding to this overkill is no other than the paper's very own stable-mate, *Sky TV*. For in the same edition we find a list of football matches "selected" for live screening on the *Sky Sports* satellite channel — starting with six fixtures in... August. Just how much ironing can one viewer do?

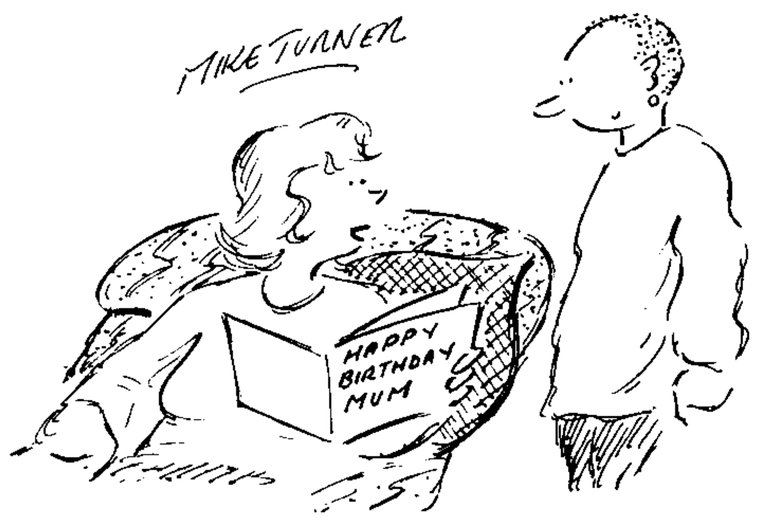
**TELEVISION viewers actually prefer paying for channels that are at present provided free, according to the** *Financial Times*. **Raymond Snoddy, its media correspondent, reports that** *Sky* **is "privately claiming a significant boost in satellite dish sales in advance of the launch of its new subscription channel package... If confirmed, this would be the first evidence that new subscribers at least are not being put off by the move to subscriptions on virtually all channels... It will mean that viewers will have to pay for channels that are at present free to those with dishes."**

He reports in the second paragraph that "internal estimates say dish sales have been running at more than 15,000 a week since the start of July." Readers who persist down to the eighth paragraph will discover that Barb, which produces the official viewing figures, "believes there were 2.477m satellite dishes in the UK on July 1 and by August 1 this had risen to 2.501m." And *that* — although the *FT* does not bother to say so — would mean that sales were running at only 6,000 a week. And he reports that GfK, the market research group, had estimated an increase of 6,750 a week.

It might have been a fairer report if the two independent estimates, which largely agree with one another, were given at least as much prominence as the anonymous "private claims" coming from inside the industry. But then they would have had to change the headline: "BSkyB predicts surge in satellite dish sales." The *FT* owns a large part of BSkyB.

**RAMPANT Birtism at the Beeb is, we are told constantly, aimed at cutting down "overheads" to free money for programme-making. No matter, then, that broadcasting "overheads" traditionally have included the cost of such fripperies as studios, cameras and cameramen.**

So, the magic of DG John Birt's Producer Choice madness is that departments will now have the money to buy essential items — such as studios, cameras, and cameramen. This, of course, produces a massive and real improvement in programme funding, as anyone can see just by visiting the echoing vault that is the BBC TV centre.




*"A tattoo voucher! Thank you, son..."*

**EJ THRIBBS from all over the country will be gathering in Covent Garden next Saturday for the AGM of the Poetry Society. It is likely to be a dithyrambic occasion.**

The first item on the agenda will be a motion from the deputy chairman, Richard Tyrrell, to cut the size of the Society's council from 21 to 11, and to allow council members to be appointed rather than bothering with the tiresome necessity of being elected.

Many of the Thribbs suspect that this is a device to stifle rebellion in the ranks by handing more power to the management.

What have Tyrrell and his fellow executives done to justify this extension of their authority? Early this April an appraisal team from the Arts Council delivered a damning report on their management of the Society, which caused director Chris Green to confirm his resolve to say good-bye in September. The Arts Council warned of withdrawing the Society's Arts Council grant (£148,000 p.a.) by October 1994 unless dramatic improvements were made.

Yet in the Society's annual report, published more than two months after this lethal verdict was delivered, chairwoman Hilary Davies claimed that "at the time of writing we remain unsure of what its [the appraisal's] major findings will be".

When not facing flak over this, Davies and her colleagues will also be asked to explain the society's recent move to Betterton Street, Covent Garden. Its previous HQ in Earl's Court was large enough to accommodate large gatherings of versifiers; it also had a bar and a bookshop. The new office has no space for such luxuries, thereby reducing the likelihood of attracting any new members.

But the present regime seems uninterested in recruitment, anyway. At the end of May the Society's long-serving and highly efficient membership secretary, Betty Redpath, was sacked.

**ANYONE applying for the job of Senior Marketing Officer at Sadler's Wells Theatre is sent a letter from the assistant administrator, Charlotte Donelan, emphasising at great length that "Sadler's Wells is committed to a policy of equal opportunities... We do this by judging applicants only on their ability to do the job... No other information is taken into account".**

All opportunities are equal — but some, it seems, are more equal than others. For Ms Donelan also asks applicants to fill in a "monitoring form to help us check that we are carrying out our policy of equal opportunities for all people. The information will be kept confidential and will have no bearing on your application, *except that suitably qualified applicants with disabilities will automatically be offered an interview*". (Italics added.)

Disabled people who are tempted to seize this opportunity may, however, have their enthusiasm dampened when they read the job specification. "Sadler's Wells", it notes, "is an old building with narrow passageways and lots of stairs. It is essential that the postholder is able to negotiate these." The enlightened policy at Sadler's Wells thus seems to amount to this: wheelchair-bound candidates can be certain of getting an interview; they can be equally certain of not getting the job.

**RICHARD Branson's Virgin 1215 is now available via one of the BSkyB audio channels, as well as on unglamorous old medium wave. Meanwhile, listeners to either service must endure hourly — and at peak times, half hourly — plugs for Sky News (which supplies the radio station's bulletins), accompanied by trailers for a Sky Movies contest being run in association with Virgin Megastores.**

Of course, Branson's interest in non-terrestrial transmissions is by no means new. Leaving aside Super Station, a syndicated service delivered by satellite to local commercial broadcasters which he quickly gave up on, the Virgin corporation was one of the original investors in the ill-fated British Satellite Broadcasting.

However, while fellow shareholders like Pearson, Granada et al were busy trying to outmanoeuvre Sky, Branson (the well-known capitalist) was to be found holding secret discussions with Rupert Murdoch about whether a head to head contest was really necessary, and couldn't some mutually satisfactory "arrangement" be reached to end the battle.

After Murdoch had — privately, of course — informed him that News Corp would continue to compete against BSB, Branson (without telling his partners why) suddenly sold his shareholding to the then Australian tycoon Alan Bond. BSB was later to collapse into an amalgamation with Sky, which saw Murdoch come out well on top.

## POLLUTION

**MORE disturbing news from the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston, as the facility's new "commercial" managers continue to seek cost cuts at the expense of safety.**

The latest attempt by the Hunting-Brae consortium to curry favour with its cash-strapped masters at the Ministry of Defence is a proposal to revamp the complex's old, ad hoc and dangerous collection of buildings for treating radioactive liquid wastes, instead of completing the construction of a purpose-designed plant.

The new building, known as A91, was intended to treat the liquid wastes arising from the production of Trident warhead cores in the adjacent A90 plant. However, since a spectacular commissioning cock-up in 1991 wrecked the building's internal equipment, the MoD has done nothing to advance its completion.

The cost of the necessary remedial work — at least £20 million — has no doubt contributed to the Ministry's prevarication. So Hunting-Brae has been making overtures to HM Inspectorate of Pollution for permission to modify the old waste treatment complex instead. (Sources at HMIP confirmed that "negotiations" were in progress.)

That the government watchdog for environmental safety should even be considering the idea is astounding, given the recommendations of the Pochin committee, which carried out the only independent audit of safety at Aldermaston 15 years ago.

Pochin's 1978 report identified the treatment complex for liquid wastes as the biggest single hazard to health at the establishment and said it was "essential" that the dangerous processes that went on inside were relocated to appropriately designed new buildings "as soon as practicable".

NOTICE BOARDS

A new column celebrating theatre critics

**PRESENT LAUGHTER** (Globe)

"If you want to see just one play in London's West End this summer, go for the revival of Noel Coward's *Present Laughter.*"
*Malcolm Rutherford, Financial Times*

"Tom Conti's dreadful new production..."
*Michael Billington, Guardian*

—o—

"Conti alone is worth the ticket price."
*William Cook, Mail on Sunday*

"He simply isn't funny."
*Clive Herschhorn, Sunday Express*

# ROTTEN BOROUGHS

## BRENT

**FRESH political controversy has erupted in Britain's barmiest borough, where the Tories' ever-fragile ruling majority is now in serious trouble.**

Fed up with the blatant chicanery which passes for municipal politics in Bent, six high-minded Tory members have split from the official Conservative group and formed the latest in a long line of unofficial splinter groups, the Constitutional Conservatives.

Why now? The Six are protesting at the dodgy tactics used by deputy council leader John Warren at the Tories' last group elections. Facing dismissal at the hands of irate colleagues (he had calculated that he would lose the vote 16-15) Warren pulled off a masterstroke: he transformed two Labour councillors, Maniphai Patel and Harshad Barot, into Tory members, producing them at the group elections as new defectees with full voting rights. Amazingly enough, the two rebels then voted for Warren, who remained in power by 17 votes to 16.

Warren's protests that ex-Labour councillors Patel and Barot had been sitting as independents and were now authentic Tories, failed to convince everybody. After all, Barot, who has a conviction for attempting to defraud Brent over a housing grant, had been denounced by Tory council leader Bob Blackman as unfit to hold public office only a few months previously.

Tory Central Office has now ruled that Bent Tories' standing orders are so vague no wrong-doing can be proved, but that the rules should be firmed up to stop it happening again!

## TOWER HAMLETS

**PETTICOAT Lane, the world's most famous cockney market, is in big trouble following some Lambeth-like shady practices by the market's municipal bosses, Liberal-run Tower Hamlets.**

Four years ago, the Lane was running at a surplus, with more than £300,000 in its account. Even though revenue has increased over the last few years, the market is now one-and-a-half million pounds in the red, and the District Auditor wants to know why.

Amongst his investigations he will also want to know why:

- According to council figures £33,000 has been spent on the local Goulston Street swimming pool and laundry, both of which closed down more than three years ago.
- £15,000 was spent on portable bins which never appeared.
- £90,000 was supposedly spent on refurbishing the Lane's toilets. The council admits that the work never took place.
- The council is planning to spend £122,000 on three mobile loos which should cost about £15,000.

Last year a council-commissioned inquiry by barrister John Hendy savaged Tower Hamlets' running of Petticoat Lane. In his report Hendy said he was "astonished at the continuing manifestation of corruption at the highest levels during our investigation".

Tower Hamlets' response has been to increase the market traders' fees, first by 15 per cent last year, and now by 35 per cent, to a total of £18 per day. In fact, the council wanted to set the pitch fee at double the figure until the courts stopped them. Surely Tower Hamlets councillors aren't trying to drive the market out of Petticoat Lane to cover up their own incompetence?

*"No man has ever set foot here before – it's the legendary Jurassic Business Park!"*

## PROPERTY NEWS

**A STRANGE confection is being dished out to residents of Kingsway Court, a crumbling 60s seaside block of 104 flats in sunny Hove, whose freehold is owned by the Mars' pension fund.**

The sweets manufacturer has slapped a one-and-a-half million pound repairs bill on the mostly elderly residents (which works out at some £14,000 per flat).

Unsurprisingly, many Kingsway Court residents are refusing to pay and berating Mars for acting with undue secrecy in handling the negotiations, although this is in keeping with the company's traditional mystique.

Mars has now issued High Court writs against some of those tenants who have refused to pay their share of the repairs bill, and to clarify who is responsible. It is even paying up to £10,000 of the legal fees of two compliant residents. The outcome could create a precedent for landlord and tenant legislation: if Mars is successful, leaseholders anywhere in England could be faced with hefty repairs bills.

Interestingly enough, one of the compliant Kingsway Court residents, Kenneth Lane, a director of Brighton Conservatives' Association, is a director of a new company, Kingsway Court Hove Ltd, which has been set up to buy the freehold from Mars. This could be a most lucrative transaction.

In 1981 Mars bought the freehold for £85,000 and now values it at up to two million pounds. In 1996 the ground rents, currently less than £100 a year per flat (about £10,000 p.a. for the whole block), can be increased to 10 per cent of the market rental value. This could work out at about £20 a flat per week, or around £100,000 a year, a tenfold increase.

## ENERGY NEWS

**A PALE, intense-looking man took the microphone before 100 delegates from 20 countries at the recent international wave energy conference in Edinburgh and, in a challenging manner suggesting that he was saying something controversial, declared: "You are listening to an honest man."**

It was Peter Clark, a partner in the distinguished firm of consulting engineers to the government, Rendel Palmer & Tritton (RPT). It has been at the centre of the long-running battle over whether the energy establishment set out to destroy the threat of a powerful newcomer when wave energy arrived on the scene. That was in 1978 when RPT declared that electricity from the waves would cost about ten times as much as the more ordinary, polluting sources. It was a crippling blow against a nascent technology.

Since then Clark, the company's wave energy expert, has failed to respond to the critics until the conference, when he surprised everyone by taking the stage. He said: "There were some very serious allegations made by people who were responsible for reporting last time around. Those allegations were completely false. Wave energy is the most interesting thing I have worked on. Only a fool kills a very interesting subject and a good source of income. If you had seen my defence of wave energy before ACORD (the Advisory Council on Research and Development) you would all have been cheering."

These Delphic remarks need explanation. It is not clear what occasion he meant when he talked of "last time round" but it may have been a reference to an article in *Private Eye* on October 11, 1991 which referred to the ACORD meeting and had considerable impact on politicians. The ACORD meeting was the critical occasion when the government's top scientific advisers recommended the ending of all support for wave energy.

The meeting was held in secret at the civil service mansion for weekend plotting in Sunningdale, Surrey. The government's own head of wave energy research was, for the first time ever, excluded from the meeting and it took six weeks to massage the official version of what happened before an announcement was made. Now Clark *appears* to be saying that he was present at the secret meeting. He has not replied to an invitation to say if this is so.

There have been requests by MPs for the contemporary Minutes to be published but they have always been resisted by government, although there is no suggestion that either security or commercial confidentiality is involved. After Clark's surprise invasion, the pressure on government to release the Minutes can be expected to increase because of the growing suspicion that the government has something to hide.

## WATER NEWS

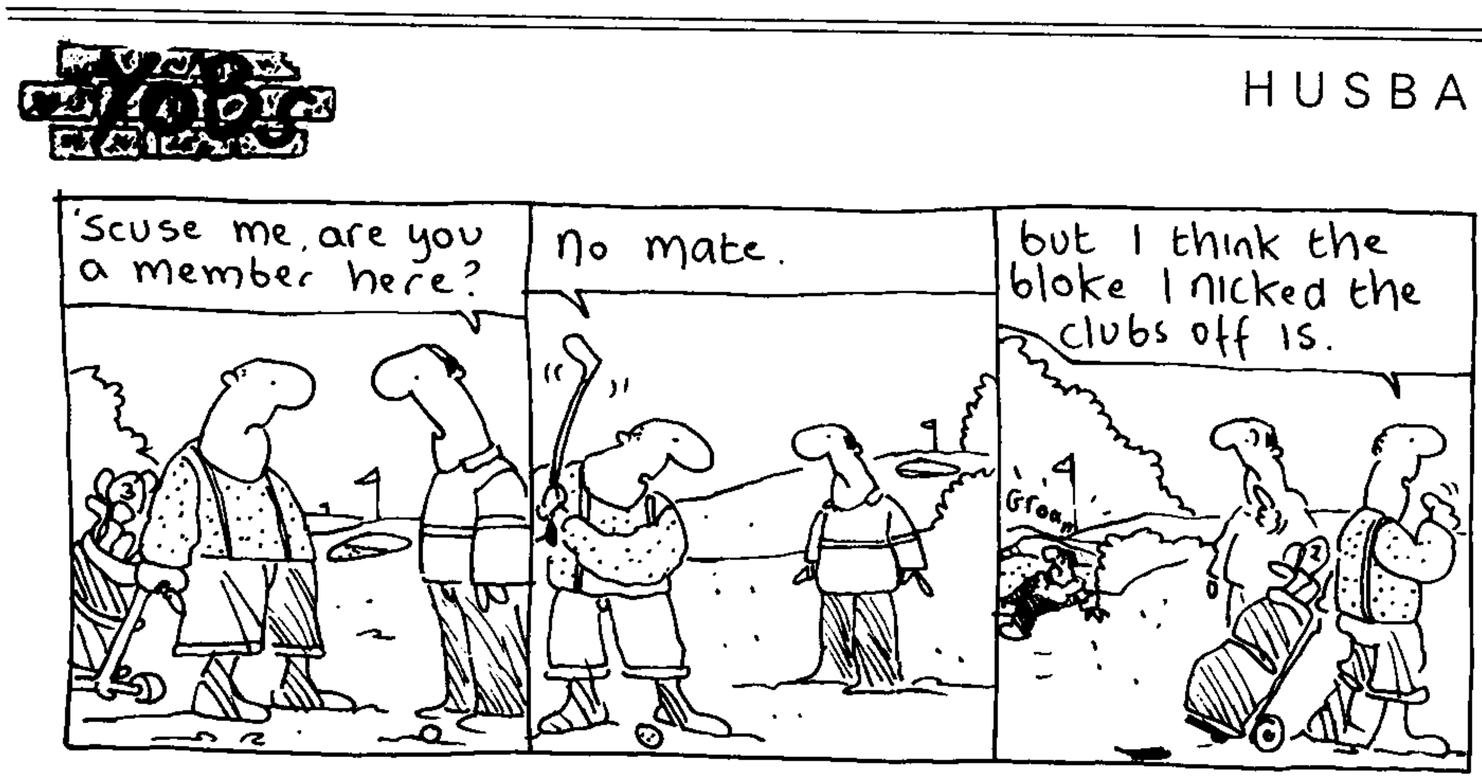
**MEMBERS of the press were excluded from the recent annual shareholders' meeting of Yorkshire Water (see *Eyes* passim) because, according to £156,000-a-year part-time chairman Sir Gordon Jones, "we did not have adequate facilities for them".**

In the meeting, shareholder after angry shareholder raised objections to the board's policies on issues ranging from pumping untreated sewage into the sea, going along with plans to put fluoride in drinking water, and paying the bosses such huge salaries. Sir Gordon Jones said the shareholders' meeting was the wrong place to raise such issues!

Meanwhile, an *Eye* reader who wrote to Yorkshire Water suggesting it uses some of its massive profits to prevent above-inflation price rises, has received a lesson in sound business practice in response.

Yorkshire Water's Customer Liaison Manager, Keith Nunns, wrote that the shareholders' dividend accounted for a third of the profits, and that it is the shareholders' "return on the money which they have provided for the business and which, if borrowed, would have cost the company more in interest charges".

The unimpressed reader says: "I thought investment capital came from charging me prices well above the rate of inflation, when in fact it appears to come from shareholders. Anyway, paying back a third to shareholders is much cheaper than borrowing it from a bank where interest rates are eight or nine per cent — they say so. So they are actually saving me money! Thank goodness for free enterprise!"



# SALLY DEEDES

**FOLLOWING our previous story on the manoeuvrings of Pickfords the removal firm (See *Eye* 823), several readers have sent in their own particular experiences.**

A Mr Pendreich asked Pickfords to collect the contents of his grandmother's house in Belgium and transport them to his father's house in Scotland, the rest to come down to his own home in London.

Pickfords' agents in Brussels did a marvellous job of packing up the pieces, but warning bells started to sound when Pickfords delivered to his father in Scotland a Venetian crystal chandelier wrapped in a fur coat and stuffed inside a cardboard box. Several arms were broken off and the light completely irreparable — it was obvious that this had not been the original packing.

A month later the firm delivered the rest of the furniture to Mr Pendreich's house in London. Out of the partially-collapsed packing case came four chairs with broken or scratched legs, a display cabinet with its top staved in, and a writing desk covered in a hundred scratches.

He wrote to Pickfords asking on whose authority the furniture had been repacked. No comment, either from the British Association of Removers — to whom he complained bitterly — or Pickfords.

● Last winter another couple moved some of their furniture to a holiday home in France that they wished to rent the following Easter.

They took two weeks off in freezing weather and arrived in France in anticipation of Pickfords' delivery. Seven days later, still no delivery and they were told that the furniture would arrive the following Friday. At 6.30pm they received a call from the driver, who was in Bordeaux. He had no instructions as to how to find them (a map had been given to the Edinburgh office, but obviously not passed on to the driver).

At 8.30 the driver was still in Bordeaux in a traffic jam, which meant an 11pm arrival and understandably the driver was reluctant. Pickfords would arrive on Saturday morning to unload, leaving the couple a day to unpack the furniture and put the house to rights before their necessary return to Scotland on the Sunday.

It didn't help matters to find that the British drivers were quoting ETAs in British time. Apparently Pickfords does not change its clocks crossing the Channel.

When the van doors opened, the couple were horrified. Nothing was wrapped. Not even a blanket protected a brand new sofa, which was pressed against the roof and, naturally, damaged. An antique table had been broken in two. A brand new duvet had been taken out of its bag and used to stuff a wardrobe, and mirrors and pictures had no protection at all. As a result of this delivery they had to leave the house in turmoil, a bed without legs, a wardrobe without a base, and the linen all needing laundering since it had been used as packaging.

● Mr Elwood moved to Edinburgh in 1990. He signed an inventory and put furniture in storage for two months whilst work was carried out on his new house. On delivery, various pieces of furniture were missing — a gilt mirror, a fireguard, a Victorian stool, some blue and white china, and a very distinctive Davenport desk containing years of personal letters and memorabilia.

Mrs Elwood was naturally most distressed and, since her birthday followed close upon the date of the move, her mother thinking to soften the blow went to buy her a new piece of furniture to replace those she had lost. On visiting one antique warehouse in Edinburgh she was amazed to discover the selfsame Davenport desk, minus the personal documents and letters.

On investigation, the Lothian police traced the desk's history and found that the possessions had been sold two months previously to an antique dealer a mile from the Elwoods' original house by some "men in a van". Could it be that whilst packing the men had identified valuable objects and taken them down the road to their friendly antique dealer? Alas, the trail had by this time gone dead and no arrests were made.

Although the insurance company paid up without a murmur, Mr Elwood had little joy from Pickfords, who offered no compensation and absolutely no apology.

## LIBEL NEWS

**IN AN item published in this column on 5th January 1990 concerning the Surrey Union Hunt, we reported certain allegations against Rodney West and Tom Dale, terriermen with the Hunt. Both Mr West and Mr Dale deny those allegations which concerned events alleged to have taken place in November 1988.**

We accept that neither Mr West nor Mr Dale in fact committed the specific acts alleged against them. The article is now the subject of a contested libel action.

## with 'New Muckspreader'

**WHEN Mr John "Shitbag" Gummer introduced his bizarre version of the Brussels "meat hygiene" directive last year, no-one welcomed this more than the handful of companies which runs Britain's huge factory abattoirs. They hoped the ludicrous new system of veterinary inspection would be so expensive for smaller firms that it would drive them out of business — leaving a near monopoly for the big boys.**

Imagine their rage, therefore, when nine local authorities refused to send in the vets — saving a dozen or more small slaughterhouses from being bankrupted by the exorbitant new fees. They called in the Federation of Fresh Meat Wholesalers, which supposedly represents all sectors of the trade, to send a grovelling delegation to Fatty Soames, asking him to force the errant authorities into line.

Fatty's ingenious response was to ask Federation secretary, Peter Scott, to act for the ministry of agriculture. The dutiful Scott therefore threatened the local authorities with private legal action. So far, seven of the nine have caved in to Scott's threats, as he has been able to report in a sycophantic letter to his new master.

Soames cannot believe his luck. Not only is he saved the embarrassment of taking local authorities to court to enforce his disastrous legislation, he has actually managed to get the trade association which should be fighting for its members' interests to do his dirty work. It is not surprising that the smaller firms are now wondering why they contribute to Scott's salary — when he turns out to be the chief quisling in their battle for survival.

***IN THE same week that the incorruptible Public Health Laboratory Service (PHLS) was fined £12,500 by Manchester magistrates for infecting one of its valued employees with typhoid, it has rushed to the aid of the egg-eating British public. To warn them off this delicious food, it has claimed that 7.5 million eggs contaminated with Salmonella enteritides went on sale in 1991, while British eggs are three times more likely to be contaminated than those produced in other EC countries.***

***Disgusted egg producers, who have seen consumption plummet from an average of 2.29 eggs per person per week pre-Edwina Currie to 1.92 in the last quarter, point out that a survey, on which the PHLS has based its figures, was fundamentally flawed. Amongst its many basic errors was the use of a non-random sampling pattern, restricted to "high street shops", to determine the British infection rate. Since these shops account for only 60% of sales, and are more likely to stock imported eggs — which cannot be identified from their markings — the PHLS survey is totally valueless.***

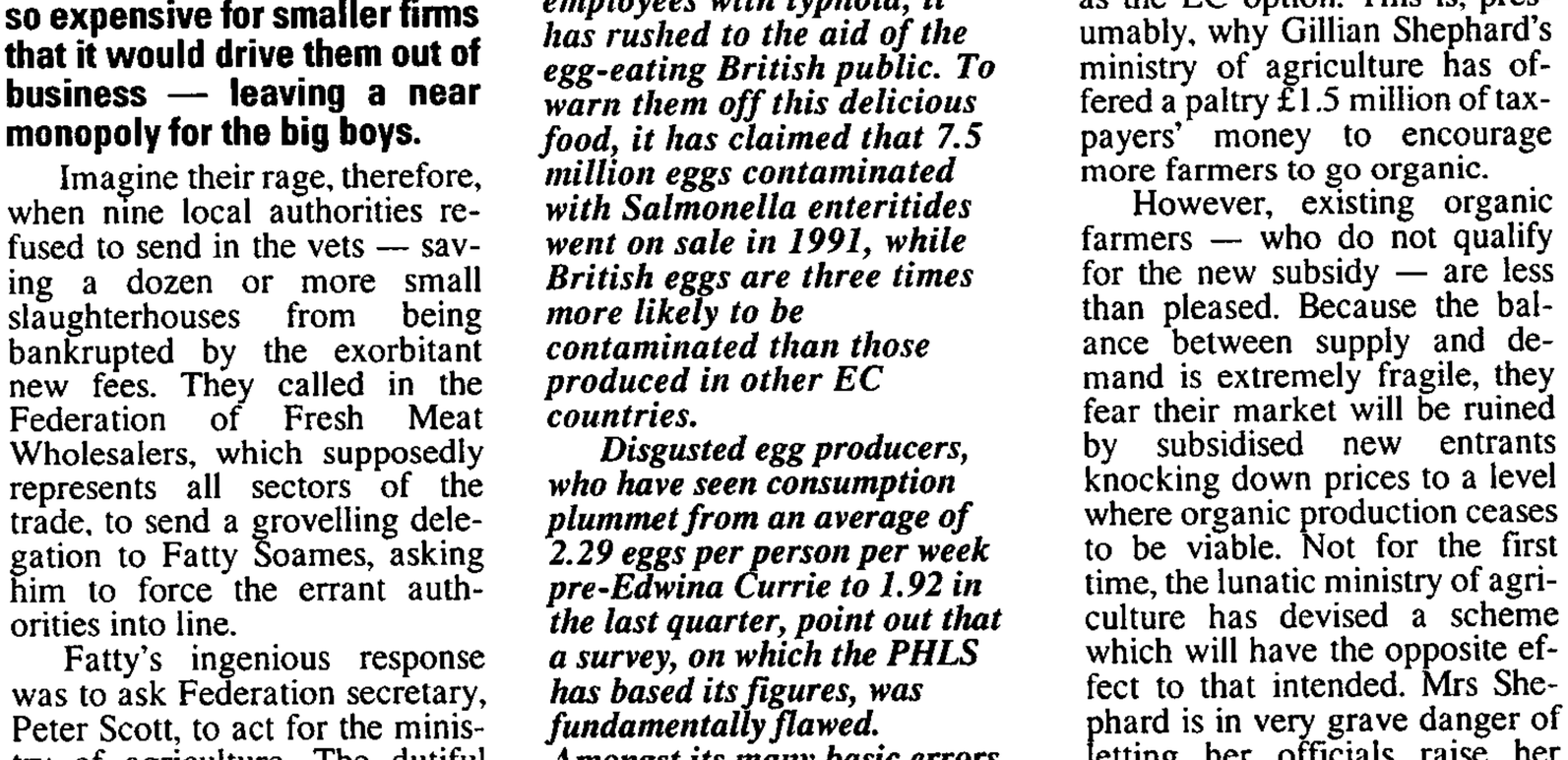
***Producers are now suggesting that the PHLS would be better advised to spend its time protecting its employees from typhoid in its own laboratories, rather than plaguing the egg industry with its sloppy and prejudiced work.***

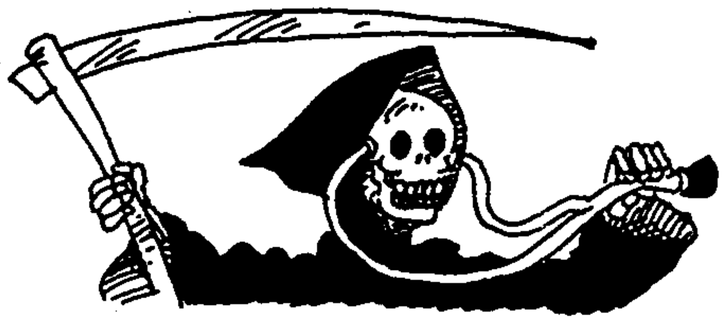
ORGANIC farming, which produces substantially less food per acre than intensive farms drenched in chemicals, might seem the ideal way of reducing overproduction. It also offers substantially more environmental benefits than the sterile and expensive set-aside scheme offered as the EC option. This is, presumably, why Gillian Shephard's ministry of agriculture has offered a paltry £1.5 million of taxpayers' money to encourage more farmers to go organic.

However, existing organic farmers — who do not qualify for the new subsidy — are less than pleased. Because the balance between supply and demand is extremely fragile, they fear their market will be ruined by subsidised new entrants knocking down prices to a level where organic production ceases to be viable. Not for the first time, the lunatic ministry of agriculture has devised a scheme which will have the opposite effect to that intended. Mrs Shephard is in very grave danger of letting her officials raise her popularity to the same level as her esteemed predecessor, the legendary Shitbag.

## Old Macdonald

ALBERT


A BETTING SHOP HAS OPENED BRETHREN! IN THIS VERY VILLAGE!! DONT LET THE EVILS OF GAMBLING ADD TO THE FINANCIAL WORRIES THAT ALREADY CAUSE HUNDREDS OF FARMING SUICIDES EACH YEAR!
ST FETID THE OBSCURE
ONLY LAST WEEK OUR CHURCH WARDEN POISONED HIMSELF WITH PARAQUAT! HIS SON CYRIL FELL ON HIS PITCHFORK! OLD WILF JUMPED IN HIS SLURRY PIT!
IF NED LONGBOTTOM'S SHOT HIMSELF MY ACCUMULATOR'S UP!



## DOING THE ROUNDS

**THE failure of Mrs Bottomley's "new" deal for junior doctors to achieve anything other than cosmetic hours reductions owes as much to consultant resistance as management penny-pinching.**

If the total number of doctors remains the same, hours reductions can only be achieved if consultants take on some of the work traditionally ascribed to juniors. Alternatively, an expansion in the number of junior doctors would get consultants off the hook, but then there would be a similar increase in consultants to maintain a career structure.

This would mean less private work per individual consultant, an equally unpalatable scenario. The third option is to declare public support for hours' reductions — whilst privately blocking their implementation.

The more outspoken members of the BMA's junior doctors' committee are now under intense pressure to give up medical politics or risk career stagnation. Meanwhile, the department of health has set up an "options appraisal group", chaired by deputy chief medical officer Dr Graham Winyard, "to examine the achievability of initiatives related to junior doctors". Don't hold your breath.

● HOURS reductions won't be achieved at **Surrey's** £1.7 million indebted **Kingston hospital**, where chief executive John Langan plans a drastic reduction in the use of agency staff. Staff have been asked "to accept a degree of flexibility in their working arrangements such that cover for shifts ordinarily provided by agency staff can be undertaken *in house*".

**South Birmingham health authority** is set to cut back on an unprecedented scale to offset a projected £24 million debt. As finance director Ian Dyson put it: "The problem is very serious. It is extremely important we get help from the region, because without it the patients of south Birmingham would have to suffer." Elsewhere, **Plymouth hospital acute unit** is losing £100,000 a month by treating too many patients.

● **MANCHESTER Royal eye hospital** is busy promulgating a two-tier health service. Non-urgent referrals from non-fundholding GPs are not even placed on a waiting list, whereas those from fundholders are given an appointment within four weeks of referral, irrespective of clinical priority. This disparity complies with quality standards specified in the contracts between GP fundholders and the **Central Manchester healthcare trust**.

● GYNAECOLOGISTS at **Norfolk and Norwich hospital** have turned down a £150,000 cash offer to treat 400 more patients because their department does not have the staff or beds to cope with the extra workload. Now the women will be sent to hospitals outside the area for their operations.

Gynaecology patients from **Kendal's Station House fundholding GP practice** are also being sent 30 miles to **Barrow** for treatment instead of their local **Westmorland general hospital trust** (WGHT) because of a price war. WGHT consultant Justin Kelly said that general surgery at the cash-strapped trust will disappear altogether if the planned closure of **Helme Chase maternity unit** does not go ahead. However, WGHT managers have yet to explain why a large amount of money was recently spent refurbishing the doomed unit.

● **RAIGMORE hospital** in **Inverness** is to stop providing nappies from September 1 to save £7,000 a year. The impecunious trust, which serves a large part of the **Highlands**, is also closing four 30-bedded wards at weekends.

**Dunfermline maternity hospital** is to close, midwives at **Redditch's Alexandra hospital** will be sacked if they don't accept a new shift pattern, and 22 student midwives from the **Mid Glamorgan, South Glamorgan and Gwent health authorities** face unemployment after they qualify in October.

This is slightly at odds with last year's Winterton report, which recommended an expansion and localisation of maternity services to provide more continuity, choice and control to mothers. Quite how this is to be achieved when the recruitment of midwives in many areas has been frozen is unclear.

Elsewhere in **Wales**, doctors and managers at **Merthyr Tydfil's Prince Charles hospital** are facing fraud squad charges of colluding to treat private patients in NHS beds.

● **CHESTER NHS trust** is planning widespread cuts to cope with its £1.7 million overspend. However, these are unlikely to extend to the five non-executive members of the trust board, who are paid £5,000 a year for working one day a week in a job that used to be voluntary. As the trust's director of development Claire Crowther put it: "I think we get exceptionally good value for money."

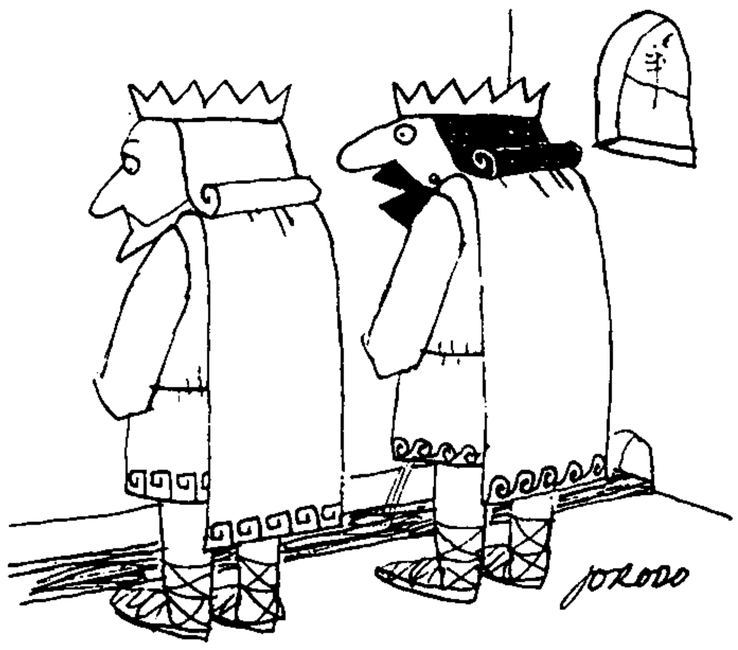
● THE **burns unit** at **East Grinstead's Queen Victoria hospital** has pioneered research into burns treatment and improvements in plastic surgery. It has its own helicopter pad and is well placed to receive casualties from Gatwick airport, Surrey, East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and the Channel. Unfortunately it is about to be closed. The world famous **Lord Mayor Treloar hospital** in **Alton, Hampshire**, is also facing closure now **Southampton general hospital** has stopped referring patients there. Its only hope is if Mrs Bottomley steps in to save the day.

● SIR Duncan Nichol is to quit his £83,000-a-year post as chief executive of the **NHS management executive** (NHSME) next March to become head of the new **centre for international health care management** at **Manchester University**. His successor is likely to be either Alan Langlands, the current deputy chief executive, or management guru Kate Jenkins. Both are involved in a controversial restructuring of the NHSME, which is widely referred to as "the Jenkins review" when discussed positively and "the Langlands review" when it is being denigrated. This has not pleased Mr Langlands.

● THE Spring 1993 edition of **Bradford hospitals trust** glossy *Today* brochure boasts that "at the end of March, no Bradford patient was waiting more than 12 months for surgery", a fact warmly applauded by chief executive David Jackson. Unfortunately, the waiting times for appointments and admissions circulated to GPs revealed that a hundred patients had been waiting in excess of a year by the end of March, rising to 365 by June 30.

● THE **Welsh Office** has circulated a useful document entitled "High Level Indicators — notes for guidance" to all NHS hospitals. In it is a clear definition of a bed: "a device or arrangement that may be used to permit a patient to lie down when the need to do so is a consequence of the patient's condition". So now we know.

***M.D.***



*"Problem, Midas?"*

# Letters

Private Eye

## Dead wrong

*Sir,*

*Congratulations on the best gaffe I've seen this year. Your contributor who compiles "MPs for Hire" must be the only person in the coutnry who hasn't spotted the fact that Robert Adley isn't MP for Christchurch any longer. (It wasn't even very difficult to see, as it came head of the list!)*

*Or are you just checking to see if anyone reads that bit?*

*Yours faithfully,*
*J.R. ORMOND,*

*Ludlow, Salop*

*Sir,*

*Your list of Members of Parliament who currently belong to Lloyd's insurance syndicates in the last* EYE *was headed by the late Robert Adley.*

*Isn't this taking the principle of "unlimited liability" a little far?*

*Yours faithfully,*
*JOHN EVERETT,*

*Darlington, Co. Durham.*

## Pa humbug

*Sir,*

*I hate to correct your great organ, but in* EYE *826 in the Street of Shame "Competition" you have said that Pearl & Dean are no more. If only that was true!*

*I quote from a recent (August 1993) edition of* EMPIRE *magazine: " 'We're still going strong,' insists Pearl & Dean's sales manager Craig Harris... 'We have nearly 400 screens all over the country and 40, with more to come, in London. We used to have 705 of the market, now we've got 22%, and are growing again.' " The tune, by the way, is called "Asteroid" by Pete Moore.*

*Sorry!*

*Yours pa-PAH-pa-PAH-pa-PAH-pa-PAH-pa-pa-pa-ingly,*
*STEPHEN BAINES,*

*Birstall, W. Yorks.*

*Sir,*

*Tsk, tsk! You must learn not to be so smug. In the "Street of Shame" column in* EYE *826 you quite confidently ridiculed Christa d'Souza's "close personal friend" for deciding to call her children Pearl and Dean and told the nation that this former bastion of cinema advertising was a thing of the past.*

*This is happily not so. Pearl & Dean did suffer a slump, but they're on the way back, owning 22 per cent of the market, including the Warner Brothers multiplex contract, not to mention the country's only IMAX screen at the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford.*

*I suggest you tell the writer of the piece to ba-bah-ba-bah-ba-bah-ba-bah-ba-ba-ba, ba-bah-ba-bah-ba-bah-ba-baaah-bog off.*

*Yours, out of breath,*
*BEN FELL,*

*Halifax, W. Yorks.*

*PS: That doesn't let Ms D'Souza off the hook for being naff!*

## Brief lives

*Sir,*

*There were three errors of fact in your brief paragraph about me last week.*

*1) My "live-in boyfriend" as you refer to him is called Peter Godwin, not Goldwin.*

*2) He is a reporter for the BBC not a producer.*

*3) He has never been a member of the Rhodesian SAS.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*JOANNA COLES,*

THE GUARDIAN, *London EC1.*

## Dim sums

*Sir,*

*Apology! In common with all previous issues,* PRIVATE EYE *may have given the impression that they believed privatisation to be just another Conservative trick to make tons of cash from handing over profitable publicly-owned companies to the government's pals. Features such as "Water News", "Thomas the Privatised Tank-Engine", and "Railway News" may have led readers to believe that state-owned monopolies offered customers a better standard of service at much lower prices.*

*They now realise that these allegations were unfounded and that Electricité de France should be strung up as it's the only language the French understand* (EYE *825*).

*Yours sincerely,*
*LAURENT BACHET,*

*London SW12.*

## Lookalike

**Scott**

**Wisdom**

*Sir,*

*Given your organ's close interest in the so-called Iraqgate affair, I am surprised that you have not commented on the remarkable resemblance between Lord Justice Scott, the chairman of the inquiry, and much-loved comedian Norman Wisdom. Are they by any chance related?*

*Yours sincerely,*
*MRS L. GARLAND,*

*Chesham, Bucks.*

## Warring fractions

*Sir,*

*Lord Gnome's article on the Bosnian tragedy is only a slight exaggeration of the attitude taken by Sir Alfred Sherman, who has been exposed as Dr Karadzic's PRO, and even grown a beard as a symbol of his solidarity with the Serbian cause.*

*Officially, Sherman is on record as saying that Bosnian territory should be partitioned between the two Christian peoples and that the Muslims should not have any government of their own. In case that sounds harsh, he advocates "compensation", presumably 30 pieces of silver each.*

*Sherman describes Serbdom as "healthy at heart". Here is a state whose money supply is out to lunch; with hyperinflation at Weimar Republic levels; with a command economy; a Peronista ruling party and a Fascist one the second largest; with liberals like Vuk Draskovic beaten up and their party threatened with suppression.*

*He need not blame this chaos on "sanctions". Every monetarist knows they don't work. Milosevic is building an empire with money he hasn't got. There is excessive military spending and a settlement and "pacification" programme in Kosovo which cost the Serb Republic 30% of its GDP even in peacetime.*

*Nothing will be solved by the betrayal of Bosnia. The Serb government will feel the need to achieve racial purity by throwing the Hungarians and Albanians out. Budapest and Tirana cannot stand idly by, so the result will be a full-scale Balkan war. And it will spread further.*

*I can never understand why that is in Britain's interests.*

*Yours sincerely,*
*TOM CARTER,*

*Somerton, Somerset.*

## Screws of the News

*Sir,*

*In your issue for 8th May 1992, you complained my* NEWS OF THE WORLD *problem page was under-sexed: "He thinks he's writing for* THE JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY. *The readers just wanted a J. Arthur... his column is going down like a cup of cold sick."*

*In your most recent issue, you complained my* NEWS OF THE WORLD *problem page was over-sexed: "Hodson devotes most of his space to replying to the sub-girlie mag correspondence — tales of heavy petting on the lounge carpet with the neighbour's husband or wife."*

*Yep — same column. Isn't malice versatile?*

*Yours,*
*PHILLIP HODSON,*

*London NW3.*

## Art trip

*Sir,*

*In response to Jon Quixley's letter ("Arty Facts",* EYE *826) about the "spectacular" new Tate annexe in St Ives with its "equally good" art, I wholeheartedly agree that it is rightly placed in deepest Cornwall, far from the crazed metropolis, as "a vindication of the contribution of the Cornish schools".*

*What a pity, then, that the architect brilliantly designed a two-inch lip to each front step, so lethal that one's eye is instantly distracted from the wonders of the building to huge and hideous signs advising caution. And once inside, what wonders greet the eye? Well, er, not much actually. The, er, frankly small collection consists exclusively of, well, frankly unexceptional abstract paintings. Looking on the bright side, there's certainly ample wall-space left for future additions. The Tate could do worse than to buy a few canvasses on sale 100 yards down the road. Among the commercial galleries in St Ives village there are at least two which not only have more to look at than the Tate but offer a cross-section of work that is vastly more interesting and, above all, more representative of the Cornish schools that are supposedly being vindicated. But perhaps the Tate mandarins have never actually been to the village — it's a long way from London.*

*Yours as a committed regionalist,*
*JOHN NICOL,*

*West Midlands.*

## Mushroom management

*Sir,*

*I share Bookworm's cynicism about the motivation and sincerity of many wordsmiths, including some journalists. The "sordid fact" of employment in the Selby area is the £2.65 per hour paid for production line employment. Such low rates are not paid by Middlebrook but this was not reported in the press.*

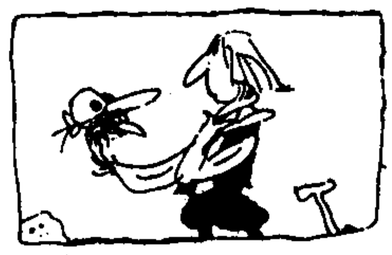
*In 1992, Middlebrook were paying £3.74 per hour. For occasional Sunday overtime, we paid premium double time, £7.48 to volunteers. Throughout the year supermarkets encouraged Sunday trading, demanding weekend deliveries from their suppliers but denying a price increase for the products of this additional work. Middlebrook found that Sunday working with full attendance had become the norm and our costs were going "through the roof". Weekend harvesting was increasingly unreliable, with the farm dependent upon volunteers at premium pay rates that contributed to trading losses.*

*Over four months we tried to negotiate contractual changes so that some, not all, employees would work rostered Sundays to be rewarded with "time and a half" pay and a compensating midweek holiday. Our efforts to achieve this sensible compromise were unsuccessful and events deteriorated into industrial action.*

*If any potential Booker prize winner, or the Bookworm, is truly concerned about the background of the Whitley dispute, I'll be pleased to offer a Yorkshire pub lunch and a pre-Prize briefing on the facts.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*DENNIS J. DRISCOLL,*

*Middlebrook Mushrooms Ltd, Market Harborough, Leics.*



# LUVVIES

We are gladiators; benign gladiators; after the sweat, dust thrill of the event we turn to the emperor for a sign. The craft. The applause. A symbiotic relationship — the one cannot live without the other. I cannot turn my back on pomp, ceremony, occasion, glamour. I know the motive behind my craft is modest and pure — to please.

When I was nominated for the Oscar, my fellow gladiators were Hoffman, Lemmon, O'Toole, Newman. Honestly, it was enough to be placed in the arena with them, my competitors, my heroes, my colleagues.

I live in a small farming village; Doris cycles round with the post each morning. "Would you sign for this, dear?" she said, hauling a hefty package out of the basket of her bicycle.

My Oscar had arrived.
I had pleased.
The emperor had spoken.
Thank You.

**BEN KINGSLEY**
**Los Angeles cinema magazine**

*Submitted by Dave Spartacus.*

***An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.***

## God bother

*Sir,*

*I leave the country for a year or two and you are at it again. You can't leave well alone, can you?*

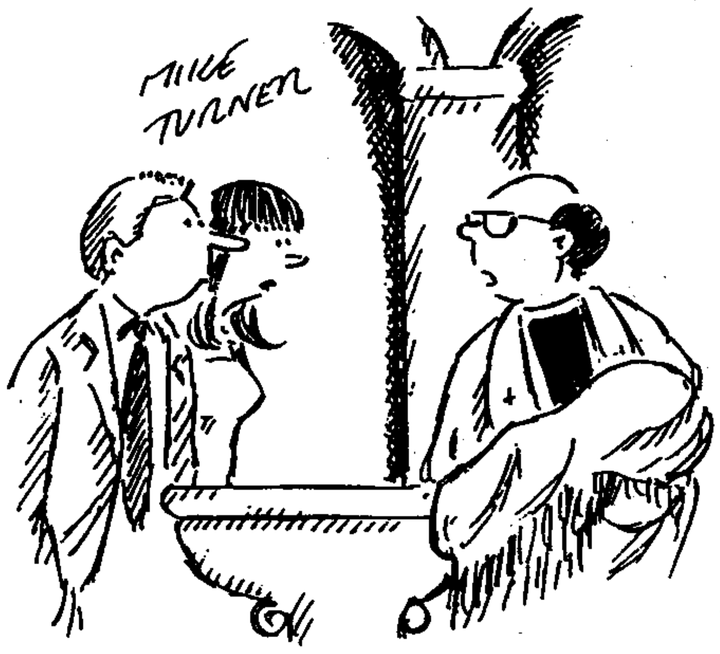
*I see that in your October 1992 edition of* PRIVATE EYE *you have a go at the Church of Scientology projects in Albania. Well I happen to think that helping people lead happier and more productive lives using L. Ron Hubbard's technology is a fine thing to do. With typical* PRIVATE EYE *finesse, you complain about our giving out 30,000 copies of the booklet,* THE WAY TO HAPPINESS, *which is a simple non-religious moral code much needed in these times in case you hadn't noticed.*

*I can't imagine giving the Albanians 30,000 copies of* PRIVATE EYE *would do them much good unless we wanted the Albanians to think we English are a pack of crazies.*

*As for Scientologists sending money to help the Albanians, well, how much did* PRIVATE EYE *send to Albania, or to Bosnia to help homeless people? How about coughing up some money to help end the genocide in Bosnia? We Scientologists believe in helping our fellow man and work with others in the community to make our towns and nations better places to live.*

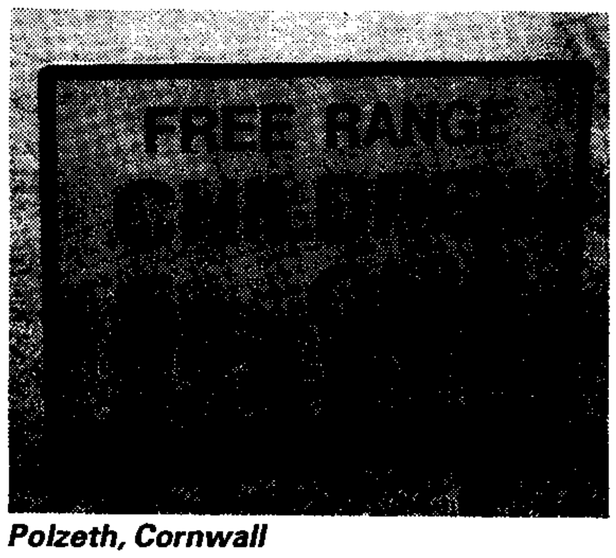
*Yours sincerely,*
*SHEILA CHALEFF,*

*Public Affairs Director, Church of Scientology, East Grinstead, W. Sussex.*




*"It's popular now, but in twenty years' time the name Tyrannosaurus Rex..."*

# I-SPY




*Polzeth, Cornwall*

*New York City*

*Long Island, NY*

**Submitted by John Trew, Charles Holland, Mark Vyvyan-Robinson, Mrs Margaret Dines.** £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

## Spare Spart

*Sir,*

*No doubt a section of your readership (826), will find Dave Spart's rant about the police extremely funny, or would do if they weren't on their summer hols in South Africa. But I can't find the subject of the death of a black woman after an early morning visit from the police one for satire. It might more properly have been the subject of a fearless* EYE *investigation although, again, I appreciate that this would reduce your circulation in Nuremburg.*

*You might also like to know that Dave Spart and the Spartists were nowhere to be seen on the large march in protest at the circumstances of the death of Joy Gardner. Instead Comrade Spart and his mates were parading through Central London on a demo entitled "Where will the West strike next?" following which they all went for a midsummer rave in Kennington Park. Spart lives it is true but not all lefties are Spartists.*

*Yours fraternally,*
*KEITH FLETT,*

*Tottenham Institute for Political Correctness, London N17.*

## Saddle sore

*Sir,*

*Re: the Grovel story about Hilary Douglas, Princess Di and "she's the office bike, isn't she". I have to tell you I didn't believe a word of it. If you are going to feed us made-up shit, at least try to use a little imagination.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*CHARLES LEE,*

*Haywards Heath, W. Sussex.*

## Useful household tool

*Sir,*

*I admit to being deeply concerned by your new John Major cartoons. No. 5, depicting the PM as an ironing board (*EYE *826), appears to credit him with virility and strength of purpose — and a flex around his neck.*

*101 uses? Such versatility too.*

*Yours,*
*PATRICK FRATER,*

*Paris.*

# Colemanballs

*£10 paid for contributions*

*"My cricket's all been played in a triangle of about two or three square miles."*
**PHIL CARRICK, Radio 4**
**(Martin Wadey)**

*"How mortally wounded is John Major..."*
**JEREMY PAXMAN, Newsnight**
**(David Wright)**

**Murray Walker:** *When did you first become aware you had a puncture?*
**Damon Hill:** *When the tyre went down, Murray.*
**BBC2**
**(Michael J. Place)**

*"Paul Tracy won't like that [being overtaken by Nigel Mansell). He doesn't like being second to none."*
**COMMENTATOR, ITV**
**(Peter Gibbs)**

*"Make or break situations — such as we have seen here — can sometimes make as well as break."*
**ROBIN OAKLEY, Radio 4**
**(Colin Armstrong)**

# HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

Letter from
## The UN
*from Our Own Correspondent*

**NOTHING has gained more sympathy for the United Nations than last week's exposé by the *Sunday Times* Insight team, whose gaffes made obvious that it did not have an inside team. As a Canadian journalist said: "Four Brits worked three months to make this? No wonder no one buys British!"**

Its inherent improbability was summed up when it said that the Secretary General's friends called him Bou Bou. Not if they want to remain on his Christmas card list, they don't! It is on a par with the malicious advice to German tourists in New York, that the appropriate way to greet black people on the subway is by staring them in the eyes and shouting: "How are yah doin', Niggah?"

However, the problem with Murdoch-type stories on our house is that they never put the blame where it belongs — which is usually with their best friends. So the *Sunset Times* blamed the plight of little Irma on "the UN". But the UN is a timorous bureaucracy taking orders from over 180 states, from Andorra to Zimbabwe — and Britain is one of the most important. After all, who appointed Lord Owen as mediator? Anyone else could have told you that this was like making Dr Guillotine a consultant brain surgeon. And it is the ineffable Sir David Hannay, John Major's ambassador to our Org, who, with the aid of his equally supercilious Gallic counterpart, has blocked all attempts in the Security Council to lift the siege of Sarajevo. Indeed, the United Nations troops *enforce* the siege by stopping Sarajevans from fleeing across the airport — unless of course they pay big enough bribes.

There is not much honour amongst diplomats. The British and French are widely reputed to have secured the sacking of Venezuelan Ambassador Diego Arria and New Zealand's Terry O'Brien for their temerity in raising principles, international law, humanity and similar un-European concepts, especially after they had led a Security Council mission to Srebrenica earlier this year. There they had squared off against the ineffable Bible thumping British Brigadier General Vere Hayes, who now seems to have rewritten the history of siege warfare by deciding that Sarajevans are besieging the Serbians outside. (Not since all those Brits in Singapore besieged Japan has there been such a memorable encirclement!) On the indignant return of the Ambassadors to New York, the Venezuelan government was asked to sack Arria, and the Kiwis were asked if they seriously wanted to sell butter to the EC — which meant no guns for the Bosnians when the vote came up. O'Brien's replacement was confirmed shortly afterwards.

Boo Boo has made plain his lack of sympathy for most people, who he thinks are much less clever than him — but the Bosnians have always been among his least favourite people. In a bizarre speech in Sarajevo last year he made it plain that he hasn't forgiven the Bosnians for not being in Africa. And it may be significant that he has appointed half the former Yugoslav foreign ministry to UN sinecures. So it was an especial triumph for old world diplomacy to get soft Bill Clinton to accept Boo Boo's veto on airstrikes against the Serbs.

He is, anyway, somewhat nervous about bombs. Ever since the FBI-inspired bomb plot against the UN, Boo Boo has been getting jumpier and jumpier. Far from the mass invasion of Egyptian staff that we — and the Egyptians — expected on his accession, it is easier for a Palestinian deportee to get back to Israel than for an Egyptian to get a job in the UN. Unless they are close family friends, he thinks that they will be undercover fundamentalists with a contract out on him, so no Egyptian security guards or cleaners are allowed in his vicinity.

Indeed, it is getting increasingly difficult for *anyone* to get in. The restrictions on journalists and staff bringing in people are tighter and tighter. Soon, even staff will not be allowed in, and Boo Boo will have what he always secretly wanted. A sealed pyramid on the banks of the East River where he can rule for eternity, undisturbed by reality. If the Gods are seriously malicious, they will lock Britain's Sir David Hannay in with him. They entertain a severely limited respect for each other.

# FUNNY OLD WORLD

**o "Let's face it Your Honours, it's not every day you catch a naked man in flagrante delicto with a female donkey while doing your rounds," a nightwatchman from Ghanzi told magistrates.**

**"Just after midnight, I heard what sounded like the intermittent screeching of brakes and a few of us went to investigate. I shone my torch, and saw the accused standing behind the donkey, balancing himself on the curve of its legs. We all expected him to be ashamed and stop, but knowing he had an audience only seemed to spur him on. When I asked him why he wanted a donkey when there were so many women around, he just shouted out that the women were all refusing him, the donkey didn't mind, and anyway it was his donkey and we were just jealous. Then he carried on unabashed."**

**Edward Genge of the Botswana Police Force later told the court that he had been asked to investigate the matter. "When I got to the scene of the crime, I found the donkey lying down. We tried to rouse her, but she was exhausted and refused to get up," he said.** *(The Okavanga Observer 16/4/93. Spotter — Stephen Clarke)*

— o —

o *"Last Thursday morning, while driving along Shaikh Salman Highway, I saw two men throwing live kittens out of the window of their van into the path of oncoming traffic. Worse, they cheered whenever one became squashed beneath those of the oncoming wheels. Such men should be pushed away*

*with water and broom even to the bottom of the sea.*

*"I was most alarmed to see such an inhumane way of disposing rid of unwanted pets, and urge all readers to show greater thoughtfulness by drowning them painlessly in a bucket.*

*"Yours, a shocked animal lover."* (Gulf Daily News (Bahrain) 18/6/93. Spotter — Geoffrey Whitton)

— o —

o "How dare you accuse us of theft? Clearly, shoddy workmanship is the culprit here," the police chief of Manila told an astonished news conference.

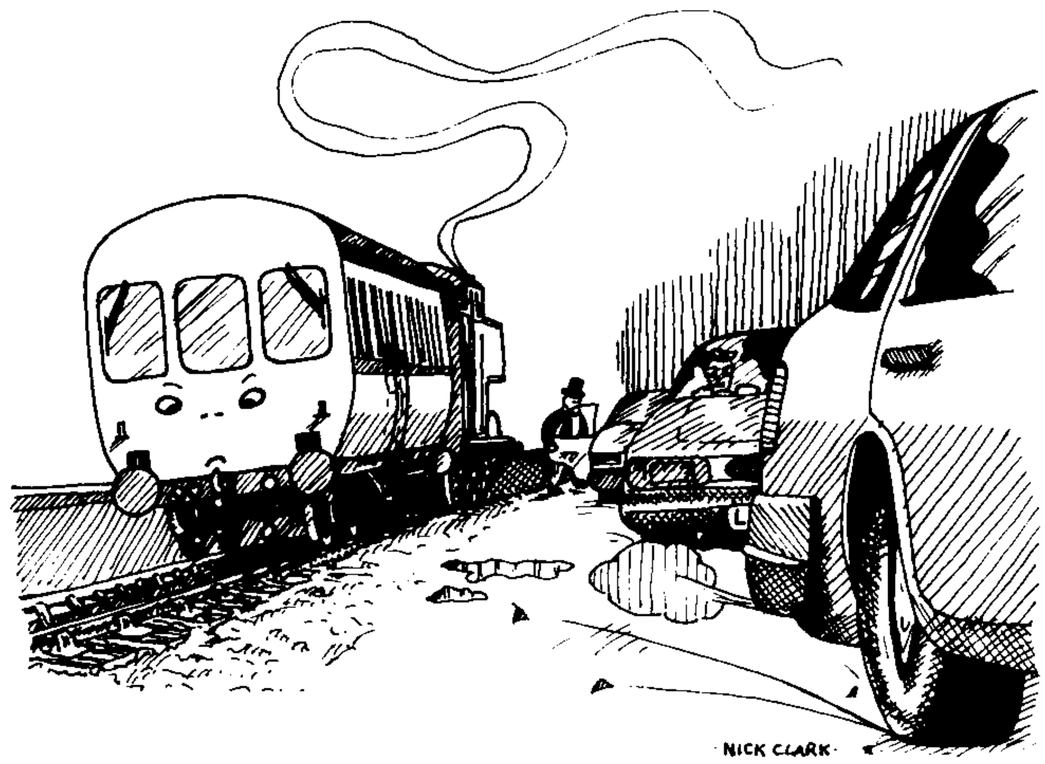
General Generoso Necesito had called the conference to explain how more than half a ton of marijuana, cocaine and amphetamines had disappeared from police evidence lockers during the last year. "Rats and cockroaches got in through gaps in the locker doors and ate it all, every last scrap," he claimed. "We know this to be a fact, because the cockroaches at police headquarters have been behaving very oddly. They just stand there looking dazed when we shine a light on them, instead of scuttling off into a dark corner. Obviously they have been getting high on drugs."

When a reporter produced photographs of police officers selling drugs on the black market, the General became furious. "You are the filth of the earth. I have told the truth. No one will believe your absurd allegations and, if you print them, arrests will follow." The press conference was hastily adjourned. (*Toronto Star 31/7/93. Spotter — Bill Kitcher)*

Compiled by
Victor Lewis-Smith

# THOMAS
## THE PRIVATISED TANK ENGINE

### Thomas and the Gravy Train




"I WANT no flippant questions. These are important people, Thomas," said the Fat Controller. Thomas was waiting patiently with Ingrid the Inspection Saloon.

"Here's someone now." Three cars drew up beside the station. "That'll be the new franchise holder, with just a selection of his shareholders."

As they boarded, more limousines arrived. "And that's the Fat Director, with some of his staff," explained the Fat Controller.

"What do they do?"

"Keep tabs on the franchise holder. Ah, now here's the Fat Regulator, with assistants of course."

"So what's his job?" asked Thomas, bewildered.

"Keeping tabs on the Fat Director." By now Ingrid was groaning under the weight of so many important people.

"But who's paying for all these people?"

The Fat Controller paused. "Those who will benefit from greater private-sector involvement in the railways."

"Hooray! The Grey Controller is going to increase our subsidy after all."

"Thomas, I told you not to be flippant," frowned the Fat Controller. He darted an anxious glance at Ingrid, who was now sagging in the middle. "Now, who's this? Ah yes, it's the Fat Railman. He looks after the tracks and stations and signals." "And I suppose someone will keep tabs on him?"

"Ah, now here's the Fat Health and Safety Executive."

"So if the Government won't pay, we'll have to put our fares up. And then nobody will travel with us, and we'll close down and these people will be out of a job. Is that so?"

"Sorry Thomas, can't stand around chatting all day," said the Fat Controller. But the moment he stepped aboard Ingrid there was a bang. One of her springs had snapped under the weight, and she was leaning at a drunken angle.

"Too many chiefs and not enough engines," muttered Thomas. The fitters had already been sacked, so all the important people got out and drove off to find their next railway.

## Apologies

There were a few mistakes to the copy of the meditation article in as much as it read "By isn't I mean everything that you can see and hear, touch, or smell, isn't means everything that is," and it should have read "By isn't I mean everything that you can see and hear, touch, or smell, means everything that is" Hopefully this will now be clear.

*New Age*

## 101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR (7) A MANAGER OF A BOTTLE BANK

# The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

## Monday

I am really enjoying our holiday in Algarvia, which is near Portugal. It is very hot, but if you jump into the pool you are soon quite cool again! Unfortunately there is no pool in this particular villa, which is odd since my friend Jeffrey distinctly assured me that all the houses in Algarvia have pools. "Only an idiot," he said, "would take a villa without a pool." Perhaps I should ring my friend Mr Gummer who knows some business people who put pools in for free!

My wife Norman, luckily, has made friends with some people who have got the villa next door on a timeshare, and she can use their pool to do her "lengths". He is called Henderson, but I do not think he is English because he does not speak to me except to say "drittsekk" to me across the fence. I assume this is Algarvian for "Good

morning," so I say "drittsekk" back to him and give him one of my famous smiles!

This morning, while I was watching Norman doing her lengths next door, our cook Latima (who is, in my judgement, quite pretty!) came out shouting "Senor Hurd, Senor Hurd!" "No," I told her, "I am Senor Major, the prime minister of England. Senor Hurd, he in London, running country." I spoke very slowly, like Mr Heath does when he is speaking French. It worked, because she immediately said: "With great respect, Senor Major, what I meant was that your friend Senor Hurd is on the telephone from London and wishes to speak to you urgently."

Mr Hurd (who is not senor at all) told me that I had to come home at once as there was a terrific opportunity to boost my popularity. "Surely," said Norman, "you would best achieve that by staying here and keeping out of the way?" As so often, she had rather missed the point.

## Tuesday

When I arrived back in London I found a top-level meeting about Bosnia taking place around the television in my office. "Look," said Mr Hurd, pointing to a picture of a little girl lying in bed in hospital, "that is Irma. All the papers are going on about her. They are all screaming for us to do something."

"No," I explained to him in my firm voice. "My policy on Bosnia is not to do anything. This is a civil war, and nothing to do with us. I was told that by a very senior member of the Government."

"Yes," said Mr Hurd, "it was me — and now I'm telling you something else."

Mr O'Donnell then took over the meeting and outlined what he called his secret plan for winning the next election, "Operation War Tot".

"I have got the media ready," he went on. "All you have to do is press the button and tomorrow's headlines will read 'Caring John Saves Toddler Irma', 'Little Irma — She's Safe And Sound Thanks To Decisive Courageous Major', and 'PM's Popularity Soars As Flyaway Babe Jets In'."

"Isn't this something of a U-turn in our policy?" I asked.

Mr Hurd gave me one of his very special, toffee-nosed looks and said: "No, prime minister, our policy is just the same. This is just a PR stunt."

"Oh," I said, "that's alright then. I'd hate people to think we have no principles."

## Wednesday

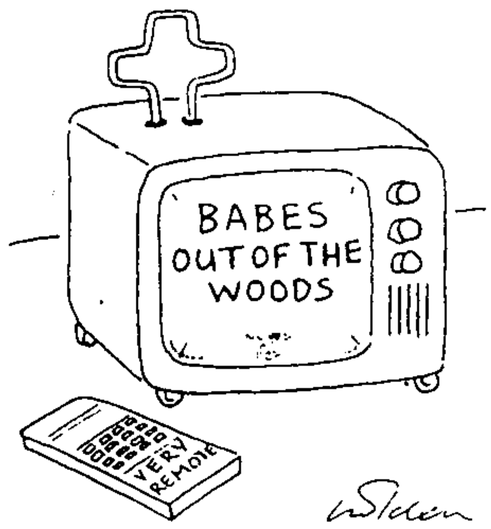
Mr Hurd and Mr O'Donnell's idea has worked brilliantly. All the headlines are just as they predicted, and my popularity is already back above 10 per cent! "Another five Irma's," I told Mr Hurd, "and we are home."

"Unlike all those 10 million refugees in the former Yugoslavia," chipped in Mr Waldegrave somewhat unhelpfully, as he brought in the mid-morning tray of our new beverage, Mrs Bottomley's Nicotine-Free Tea.

## Thursday

Today we had another very important meeting of my new "War Tot Cabinet". I suggested that we should find some more children who could be flown in to be on News At Ten with Mr Barbados. But Mr Hurd butted in to say: "Unfortunately, prime minister, there is a slight problem. We have been told by the United Nations that if we want any more war victims they have to include some adults."

"Why is that a problem?" I interposed. "We don't have to show the adults on television, do we?" I am getting very media-wise these days, as you can see, especially after writing my brilliant column in the News of the World! But Mr Howard, who is the new Home Secretary, explained that any




adults coming in would require visas, immigration documentation and work permits from the Home Office, which he could not possibly give them. In those circumstances, he said, he would have no alternative but to send round the police to deport them back to Sarajevo.

"This is typical of the UN," I said. "After all we have done to help, they tie us up in red tape."

It is time the UN had the Citizen's Charter. I must remind Mr Waldegrave to write a letter to Mr Boutros Boutros Ghali. Even his name has to be in duplicate, which shows how typically wasteful the UN is. Imagine if I was called John John Major! People would not take me seriously.

## Friday

Mrs Thatcher never went to any Test Matches. And look what happened to her. This is the point I have made to a man called Michael Parkinson who used to interview really famous people like Muhammed Ali. (Not Cecil Parkinson, of course, who is now in my Little Black Bastard Book for saying that I am not any good as a leader.) I told Mr Parkinson (Michael) that I was passionate about sport of all kinds. "Look at the England Test team," I said. "Yes," he agreed. "They are much better now they have a new captain." "And in athletics, too," I went on, "Britain now have gold medals, which shows that we can run faster than anyone else."

"Especially if there is a general election coming," said Mr Parkinson, who must have misheard me.

## Monday

Mr Howard has got some new ideas to make prisons more unpleasant. "Surely," I asked him in my special inquiry voice, "the prisoners will try and escape?"

"Yes," he said, "but we will have extra security provided by Sir Norma Fowler's Group Four." Mr Waldegrave gave him a funny look as he cleared away the cups of Options Lo-Fat chocolate drink.

Talking of Sir Norma, people are saying that I should replace him as Party chairman and have Mr Heseltine instead. My wife Norman said: "We do not want any more heart attacks when he does one of his brilliant speeches."

"But Mr Heseltine is fully recovered," I countered.

"It's not him I was thinking about," she said.

# Yes, I Had Affair With Daily Mirror Admits Kiss 'n' Tell Slagg

by Our Man With The Money
David Montgomery-Massive Cheque

**FORMER publisher's PA Sarah Slagg, 57, today tells all to the *Eye* about her no-holds-barred sordid love-tryst with *Mirror* editor Dave "Banksy" Banks.**

"It was love at first sight," says blonde glamour queen, Sarah. "I saw his cheque and it was a massive one. I couldn't wait to put it into my account."

Meanwhile, a furious Jilly Slagg, 58, who had previously enjoyed love affairs with all the newspapers, told anyone who would listen: "When a woman rival takes your cheque, you never forgive her. I'm going to win back all the publicity, just you wait and see".

***NEW LOOK JILLY – SHOCK OLD STORY***


**ON OTHER PAGES**

*My Living Hell and The Pain That Won't Go Away by Sarah Slagg*

*My Living Hell and The Pain That Won't Go Away by Jilly Slagg*

*Why would either of these women fancy a ghastly old bore like me? by Leo Snooper*


# St Cakes heads 'A' Level league table

**The independent school of St Cakes in Eccles has once again topped the 'A' Level failure league with only two 'A' Level passes being achieved. J.R. Hartley (Pages) gained a "D" grade in Media Studies and R.R.R. Bodyform (Rayner's) scored an "E" grade in Creative Counselling.**

That List In Full:

**1. The Yusuf Islam Ismalia Institute For Boys, Neasden. 100% of Pupils gained a Distinction in 'A' Level Islamic History (Special Paper: "Why Rushdie Must Die").**

**2. The Yusuf Islam Ismalia Institute For Girls, Neasden. 100% of pupils gained a Distinction in 'A' Level Islamic Domestic Science (Special Paper: "Why Rushdie Must Die").**

**3. Blessed Arnold Goodman's, Finchley. 120% of pupils gained Passes in Libel Studies** *(shurely 'Liberal Studies'? Ed)*.

**4. The Rees-Mogg School, Taunton. 100% of pupils failed on 'A' Level British Constitution.**

*(That's enough League Table, EdMaster.)*

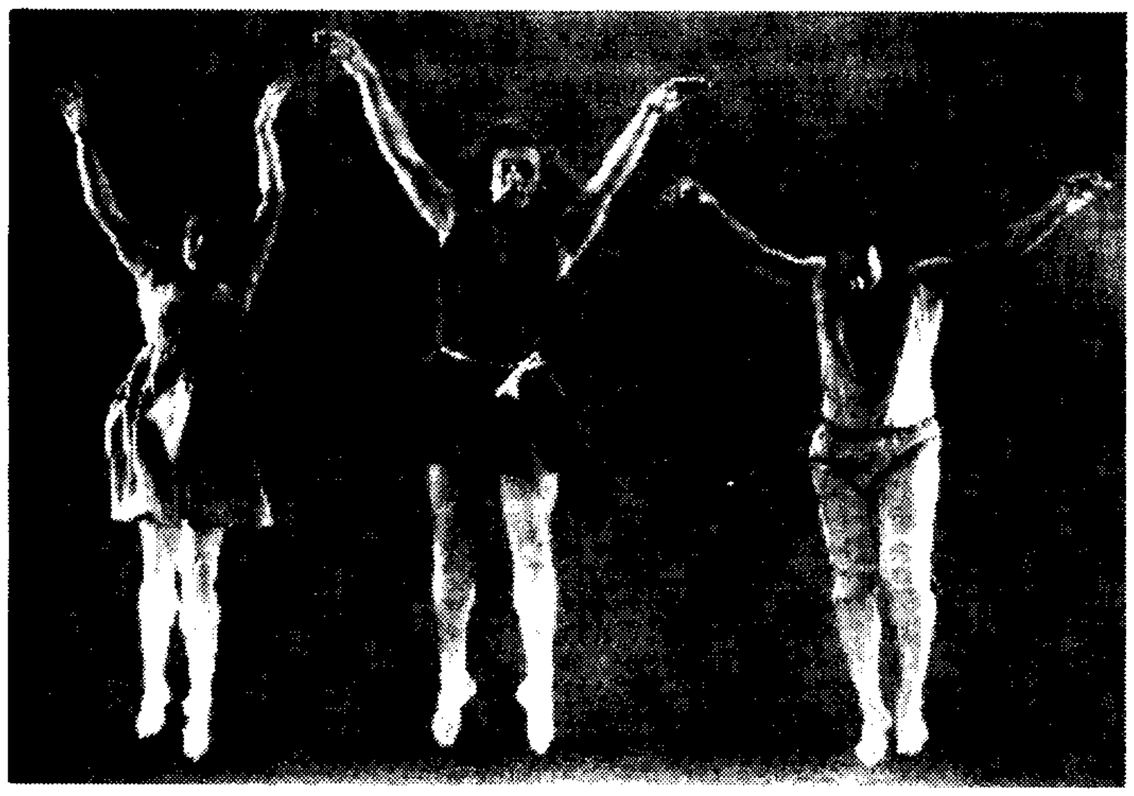
## CLINTON: OFFICIAL NEW PORTRAIT

*© KAARG OF NEASDEN*

# LUZ

BY CUTTER PERKINS & RGJ

CHAZZA'S FARM
IT'S AAL BASED ON THE OWLD TRADITIONS
AYE! WE DO THE WORK AN' HE FARTS ABOOT!
APART FROM THE HOLE HE'S DUG FER HIMSELF!
DO YOU KEEP ANY COWS?
AYE! AH HAV' TA PAY WOR SNIFFA A BLOODY FORTUNE!
HUMBUG!
CAMILLA GATE
MEBBE SHE DIDN'T LIKE YER SMALLHOLDING!
AN' THAT BIG HEIFFER'S ME BRUTHA'S! SHE'S CLAPPED OOT BUT STILL COMES ROOND AT MILKIN' TIME!
GIMME GIMME!!
MEANWHILE, AT BALMORAL..
Nº26
THEM BASTAAD PUBLISHAS AN' THEIR HOLIDAY READIN'— THEY'RE AAL FULL A SHITE!
HIGHGROVE PORTRAIT OF AN ESTATE 100% ORGANIC
SCOUTING FOR BOYS
SNIFFA HER TRUE STORY
BUDGIE THE PLAGIARYST
HISTORY- BIG BOOK WITH NO PICTURES
IF PIGS COULD FLY
BY FERGIE
THIS UN CERTAINLY IS!!!
OOPS



# EDINBURGH HIGHLIGHTS

*What to see and where to see it at the biggest festival in Edinburgh this year*

## *DRAMA*

### Awa' Ye English Bastards

Tautly written trilogy of new plays by young Scottish playwright Donald McWhinge, winner of the Hebridean Silver Medal For First Trilogies About How Awful The English Are, 1993. Assembly Hall, 19-27 August. 10 hours. No concessions to being interesting *(shurely 'to students'? Ed).*

## *COMEDY*

### Billy Tosser

Tosser is an explosive mixture of Jack Dee, Eddie Izzard, Sean Hughes and Elton John *(shurely 'Ben Elton'? Ed).* His new one-man show is sharp, rude and already sold out so you can't go. Bad luck. You'll probably get in to see Jimmy Jerk who, to be honest, is much the same. Look out for his hard-hitting lager advert on the telly. The Golden Marquee. Midnight, most nights.

## *FILM*

### The Concrete Fish

Moving autobiographical story of a remembered childhood in a small Swedish village in the 1950s. A lovingly shot masterpiece by Swedish filmmaker Jørn Nonstøp. Winner of the Guernsey Palm d'Or (Best Autobiographical Swedish Film Set In Small Village In The 1950s). The Cameo. 1-3 September.

## *DANCE*

### Hoppy Rap Rocker and the Kicking Hotshots

Exuberant modern dance from the Seattle Ballet combining elements of tap, jive and classical ballet set to music from Bernstein to James Last. Be warned that there are scenes of explicit tedium *(shurely 'nudity'? Ed)* throughout the show. The Grand House. All November.

## *ART*

### The Mirror

An exhibition of photographs by Canadian artist Kodak Brownie showing members of the public looking at last year's exhibition of photographs by Kodak Brownie showing scenes of rural Saskatchewan under snow. Brilliantly dull *(shurely 'composed'? And anyway that's enough Edinburgh. Ed).* The Scottish Academy 12-13 January.

*"I would advise him to forget King Lear and concentrate on balancing the beachball"*

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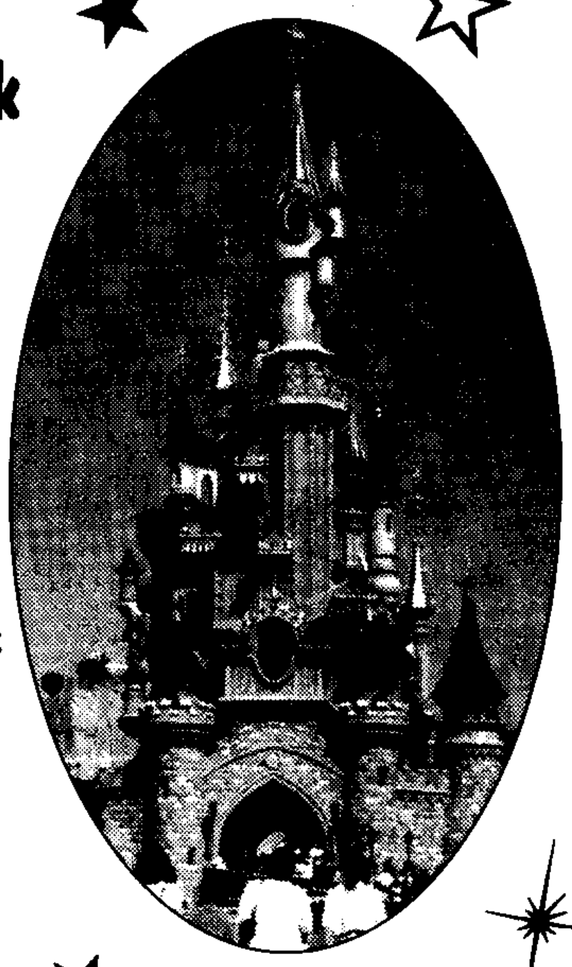
**Meet all your favourite characters:**
**● Mickey Finn! ● Minnie Bar! ● Blotto! ● The Little Barmaid! ● Pinocolada! ● Snow Ball and the Seven Shorts (Happy, Silly, Frisky, Grumpy, Melancholy, Queasy, Mywifedoesn'tunderstandme) ● And many more!**



**Yes, it's open all hours with the single-day pass-out.**

**Come to EuroDrinkey and forget all your worries – and indeed everything else!!**

Desperate advertisement for EuroDrinkey issued by Bogleby, Hargle & Pratt plc

## LET'S PØRLER NORGE
## A New Norwegian Dictionary

### Compiled by Møles Kingstonsson

**JØN**
**n. toilet, lavatory, water closet (slang). Example: "That new British Secretary of State for the Environment reminds me of a jøn."**

**SOELWYN**
**n. ordure, faeces, dung (slang). Example: "That chap with the glasses is full of soelwyn."**

**GØMMER**
**n. Bag, sack, receptacle for storing ordure (see above). Example: "Put that pile or soelwyn in the gømmer and flush it down the jøn."**

### Old John Selwyn's Country Sayings

*"When Oi do first smell the gummer,*
*Then Oi do know that 'tis be summer."* (Thos. Hardy attrib.)

# World Championship Athletics

(continued from page one)

**10,000 metres Women's Underwater Hurdles**

**Gold:** Sok Zhop *(China)*
**Silver:** Tai Rak *(China)*
**Bronze:** Zpud Yoo Laik (China)

**3,000 miles Men's *Steeplechase***

**Gold:** J. Drambooie (Kenya)
**Silver:** Kwan Trow (TDK)
**Bronze:** T. Amaria (Brazil)

**Men's Triple One-Legged Heptathlon**

**Gold:** F. Jurassic-Park III (USA)
**Silver:** J. Demjandjuk (Ukraine)
**Bronze:** A. Bergasol (Sweden)

# POETRY CORNER

**In Memoriam Stewart Granger** *(Who he? Ed)*

So. Farewell then
Stewart Granger.
Swashbuckling hero of
Countless films in
Black and white

And some
In colour.

Keith's mum says
She fancied you
When she was young.

But you fancied
Jean Simmons instead.
*(Who she? Ed.)*

E.J. Thribb (aged 17¾)

**MALE, DIVORCED**, 5ft 11ins, 24 yrs, easy going, quiet and sincere, wishes to meet and take car of young lady/mum, for lasting happy times.

*Dulwich Guardian*

HEAD GARDENER REQUIRED. This residential school for students with learning difficulties require an experienced full-time gardener with responsibility for the maintenance of staff and students. Apply to St Joseph's School, Amlets Lane, Cranleigh, Surrey

*Horticulture Week*

# WHO SAYS IT ISN'T WORKING?

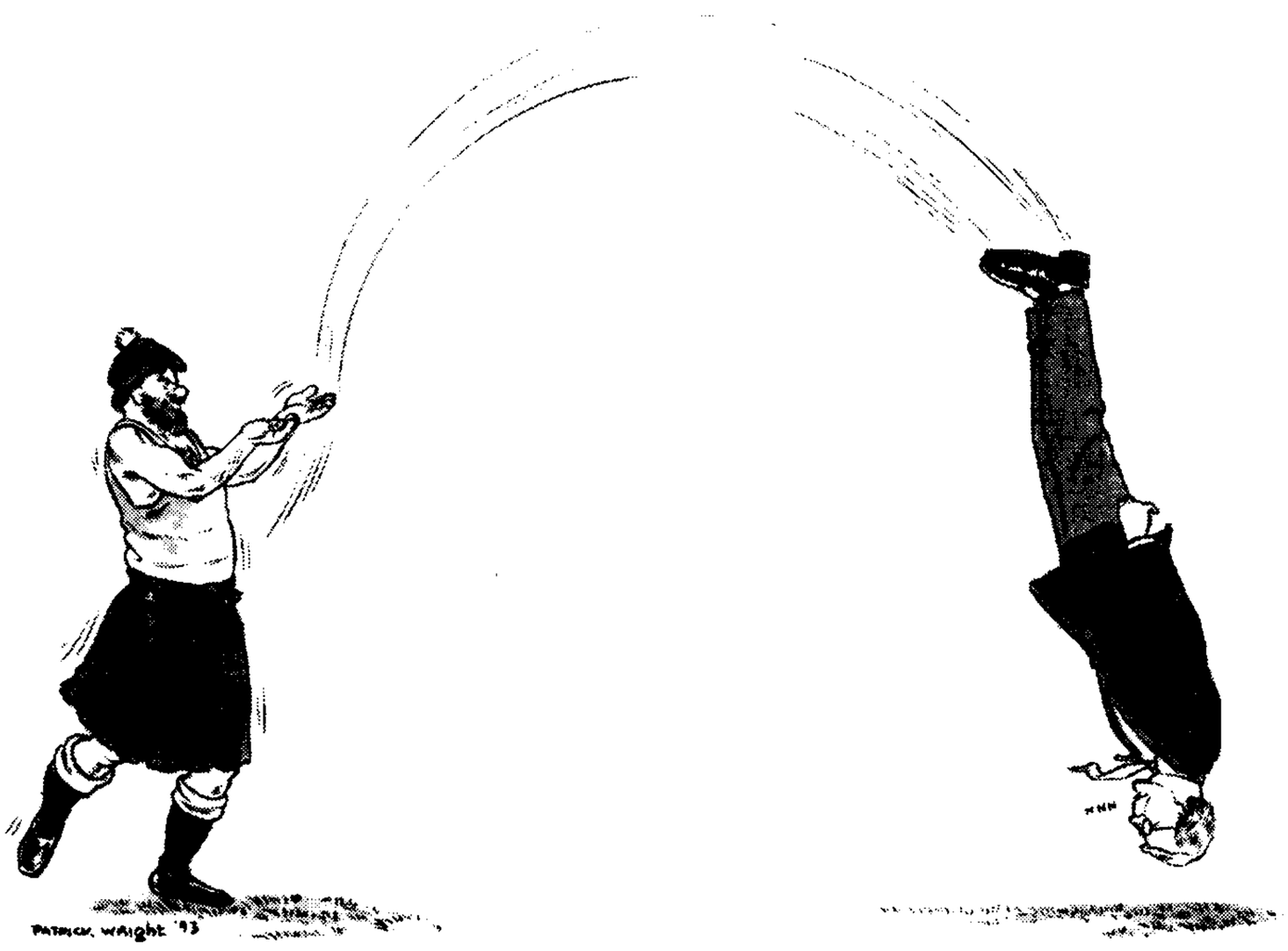
IN recent weeks there have been many claims that the Government's policy of Care in the Community isn't working. But here is the proof that releasing the mentally impaired back into the community can bring happiness to everyone involved. Mrs B. is totally mad — yet here she is harmlessly enjoying a seaside holiday, just like anyone else. She is surrounded by her family and friends just as if she was "normal".

**CARE IN THE COMMUNITY**

Better Out Than In!

Issued by the Department of Health and Propaganda


## 101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR (9) A CABER FOR THE HIGHLAND GAMES



# A Doctor writes

As a doctor I am often asked: "Doctor, could I have this operation please or I'll die?"

The simple answer is: "No." What happens is that the patient comes to the surgery and claims that he is not feeling very well. The doctor then examines him by asking the question: "Do you smoke?"

If he replies "yes", indicating that he is suffering from the condition we doctors call smoking (or *Fumus selfinflictus normalis*, to give it the full medical name), the doctor tells him to give up. Failure to do this results in very serious complications — i.e. the doctor gets very shirty and sends him home without any treatment.

If you think you are about to die, you should consult a tabloid newspaper at once.

© *A. Doctor*

## Great Bores Of Today.

"... I think they're brilliant did you see them the other night I know it's a repeat they did a take off of that film where one of them is in bed and is being terrorised by the other one and then they do that Acorn Antiques no hang on that's the other one Victoria someone or is it? one of them is married to the other one you know who does the stuff with Rik Mayall what's his name? no not Lenny Henry he's married to the other one it must be brilliant when they're at home they must have each other in stitches all the time I'd love to be a fly on the wall my friend saw them in the Groucho one night apparently she was being incredibly funny or was that the other one who did the series with Joanna Lumley? the one with the daughter who doesn't like her now that *is* fantastic I've just remembered Billy Connelly's married to the one who was on with Mel Smith I'm going back a bit now what was her name? looked like Jane Asher anyway they're always having a go at her though she was on once she can take a joke they did a take off of Tinita Te Kanawa the pop star or was it her...?

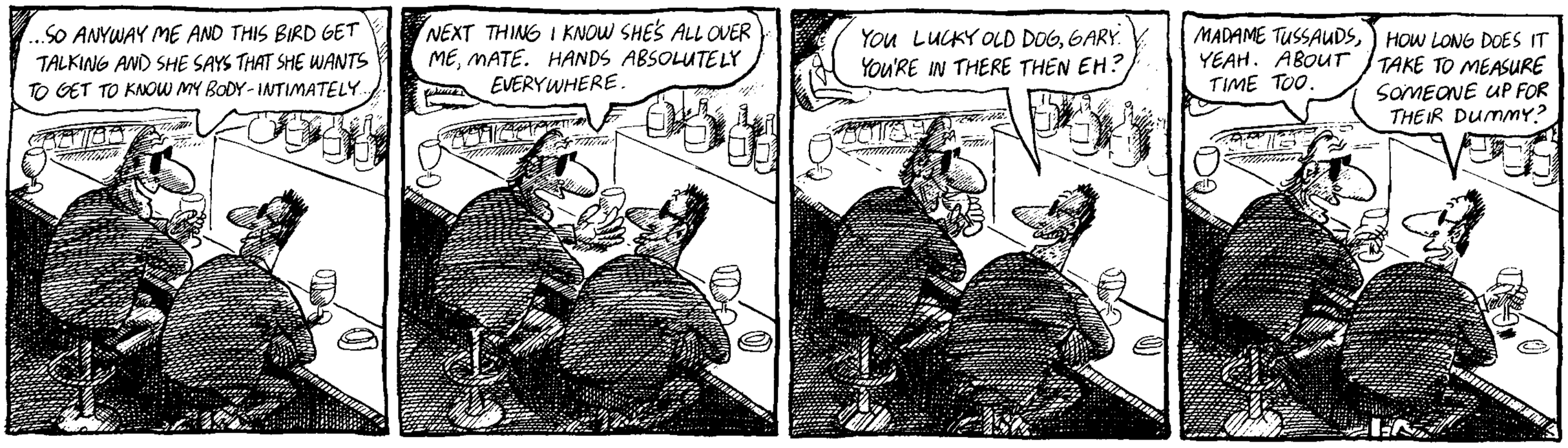
**CHINEHAM** **£47,950**

1 bedroom starter home, lounge, refitted kitchen, gas c.h., gardens.

*Basingstoke Property Gazette*

Celeb

LIGGER


...SO ANYWAY ME AND THIS BIRD GET TALKING AND SHE SAYS THAT SHE WANTS TO GET TO KNOW MY BODY-INTIMATELY...
NEXT THING I KNOW SHE'S ALL OVER ME, MATE. HANDS ABSOLUTELY EVERYWHERE.
YOU LUCKY OLD DOG, GARY. YOU'RE IN THERE THEN EH?
MADAME TUSSAUDS, YEAH. ABOUT TIME TOO.
HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO MEASURE SOMEONE UP FOR THEIR DUMMY?

# Chester Square SW1

Dear Bill,

I sometimes wonder whether the game is worth the candle. As I think I told you in my last screed, the little woman has been having her memoirs run up by a team of ghosts – though I never came across a ghost who could vanish the brownies at the rate achieved by Professor Stone. (Maurice P. admittedly did once claim that a headless spectre joined him at the bar in the Mermaid late one night and polished off fourteen bottles of stickies from the top shelf while the barmaid was cleaning her fingernails.) As a result the house has been well-nigh uninhabitable for the last six months, with dustbins full of manuscript being picked over by evil-smelling libel lawyers from Primrose Hill, the aforementioned ghosts throwing up all over the downstairs facilities, and a team of American fact-checkers plugging into the mainframe at the Library of Congress, thus adding several noughts to yours truly's telephone bill.

As if this was not enough, I returned from yet another day of checking a few facts myself with the Major in the El Chico Rooms behind the East India and Sports Club – have I recommended a wonderful little Cypriot barber in Ormonde Yard who trims the locks of Old Runcieballs? – to find my wife closeted with a horrible-looking woman in orange-framed spectacles and sling-back shoes unfurling a map of the British Isles. "Ah, Dennis," crooned the spouse. "Allow me to introduce my husband. This is Ms Hepzidah Dayglo from Harper Collins. She is handling me worldwide." "Oh, but he's too divine!" enthused the harpie, who I at once deduced to be American. "The perfect accessory! Could we do something about his teeth?"

"Now, Denis, Miss Dayglo" – "Oh please call me Bah!" interposed our guest – "Miss Bah has flown over specially from New York to organise my high-profile Author Promotion. Fifty literary lunches, seventy-five roadside signings, a hundred and eight Wine and Cheeses, and two hundred theatrical appearances nationwide with full TV and Cable tie-ins to coincide with serialisation in nice Mr Murdoch's newspapers."

I think I may have accepted too many of the Major's Singapore Sledgehammers earlier in the day, with the result that I betrayed a flicker of horror at this prospect. "Do you realise what this means, Denis?" Margaret's eyes bulged alarmingly. "An initial print run of two hundred thousand copies. A ten per cent royalty increasing in a sliding scale when sales exceed two million to fifty-five per cent. More than Jeffrey!"

Even in my befuddled state, I was able to haul in the fact that this represented quite a few cases of electric soup to put in the outhouse. Spotting my grogginess, Ms Dayglo landed the killer punch. "Our research, Sir Denis Thatcher, reveals that spouse involvement in this kind of campaign can amount to an astonishing eight per cent increase in overall sales. What is more, we intend to exploit your big humor potential as a counterpoise to Lady Thatcher's Grade A International Statesperson status. You know the kind of things: sway like that, keep the eyes unfocused, maybe a little burp or two – the TV audiences are going to just adore you!"

Did you ever see that thing on the gogglebox where poor deluded geriatrics queue up with a lot of junk from one of Maurice's car boot sales and have it valued by some snooty greaser in a pinstripe suit from Sotheby's? Imagine my surprise, standing slack-jawed at the American harpie's cheek, when who should toddle into the room, closely followed by a team of bearded louts bearing television lights etc, than the Master of Ceremonies of the aforementioned Antique Show, one Scully.

I excused myself in order to take on alcohol and, when I returned, the interview was in full swing, Margaret leaning forward into the camera, making wide sweeps with her spectacles. "Traitors, traitors!" she boomed. "Heseltine, Howe, Prior – every one of them betrayed me!" "How very sad indeed," murmured Mr Scully. "People you trusted!" At this moment Ms Dayglo rose from behind the camera with a huge notice written in lipstick on a piece of cardboard which read "Denounce Major Now". Scully was about to frame a suitable question when Margaret cut him short. "As for Mr Major, about whom you ask, I cannot conceal my contempt for a man I promoted and whose career I nurtured."

It was at the end of a very long and hot day under the lights that I took friend Scully into the Den for a transfusion. After we'd enjoyed a bottle or so of dear old Boris's Plum Vodka I took down a leather camel I acquired some years ago in Port Said, which, according to the vendor, was of great antiquity. Scully put on his special glasses and lifted the tail. "As I thought, Sir Denis, a charming piece. May I ask how you came by it?" I explained what I could remember of my visit to the soukh with Nosey Rothschild and our prolonged negotiations. Scully nodded sagely, and offered me a peep through his glasses. "You see this little tag here? A lot of these were made in the 'thirties, probably at the workshop of Paradine Soft Toys, now a subsidiary of Kids 'R' Us. As to the value of it, would you be surprised if I were to say 'worthless'?"

Ah well, you win some, you lose some. Assuming the old girl's Dirty Linen cleans up, how do you feel about an eight-day train cruise to Tashkent? Maurice P. knows someone who has bought up the Russian railways for peanuts, and all you have to do is give a lecture on anything that takes your fancy while the train is going along. I've said I'll do a demonstration of How To Make The Perfect Cocktail Using Only Ingredients To Be Found In Anybody's Garage.

May a Divine Radiance illuminate your nether regions.

Yours in the Soup (Electric),

# MERCY FLIGHT GIVES HOPE FOR WAR VICTIM

by Our Medical Correspondent **Lunchtime O'Bosnia**

**IT WAS a pitiful sight. Little John Major was lying at the bottom of the polls with little chance of survival. The experts had almost given up. And then came a miracle. Suddenly there was a chance that John's popularity could be airlifted to safety by a single flight into Sarajevo.**

A nation held its breath as Operation Major got under way and the most famous victim of the lack of fighting was at last given the treatment by the newspapers that he so desperately required.

Before, his condition had been critical. The team looking after him had neither the resources nor the talent to halt his decline.

"We thought he would go under," said spin-doctor O'Donnell. "We gave him a few weeks at most. Time was running out and the polls weren't responding at all, whatever we did."

The doctor explained that although they had tried keeping him quiet and not letting him do anything, the only thing that would save him was a massive injection of good publicity. "And you just can't get that in London," said the spin-doctor. "You have to go to Bosnia."

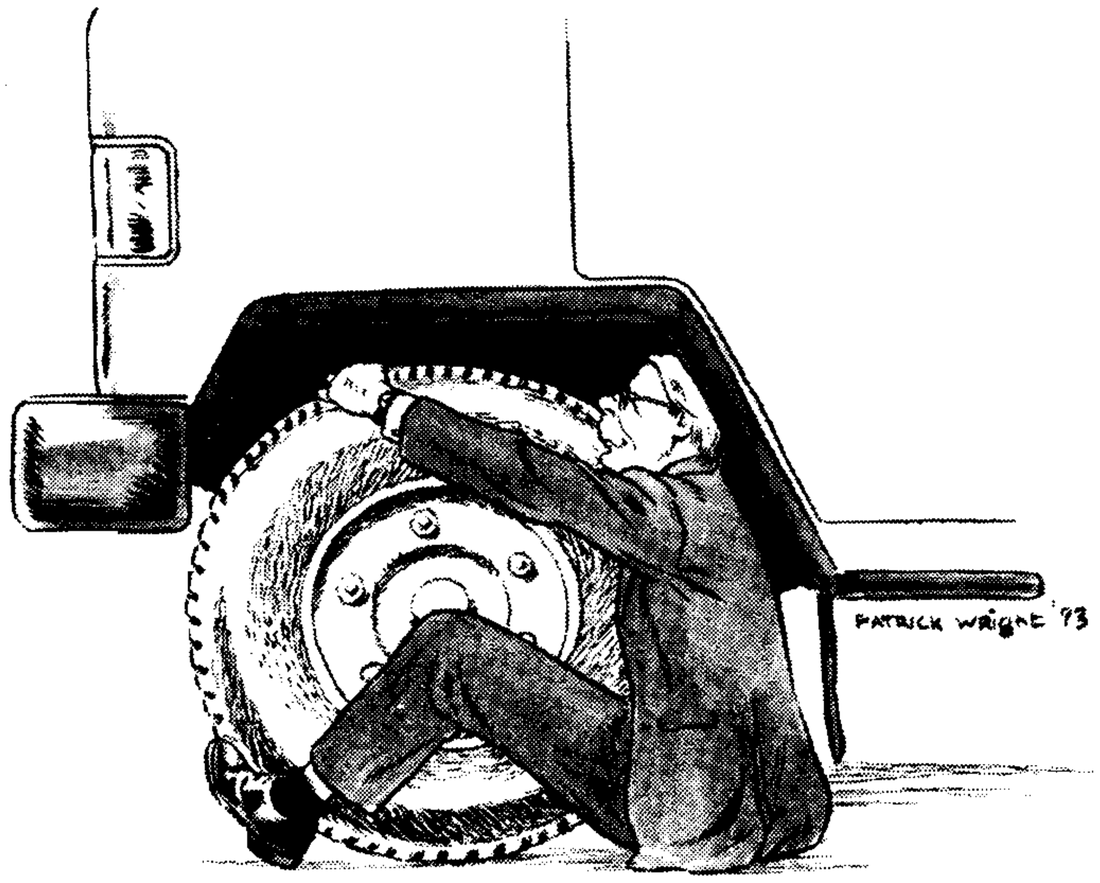
## LATE NEWS

**Controversy has now broken out after a number of other casualties tried to get in on the airlift. Said an official: "It's disgraceful. The Italians and the French are trying to benefit as well. The whole exercise should only be for really desperate cases like Little John."**

*(Reuters)*

## 101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR (8)

A WHEELCLAMP




# *Notes & Queries*

**QUESTION: Who was the Man in the Iron Mask?**

☐ For years it was believed that he was the half-brother of King Louis XXXV (Le Duc d'Ellington, 1641-?). But latest research links him to the even older legend of the Shroud of Turin. The theory is that the Knights Templar accompanied Joseph of Arimathea on his visit to Brittany where he founded a secret order of mystical warriors who guarded the Holy Grail in a hilltop fortress which later became the Albigensian stronghold of Nevers-sur-Dimanche, where in 1223 the Cathars made their last stand against (contd. 1294). — *H. Thompson, London N7.*

**QUESTION: Who invented braces?**

☐ The answer is not, as Mrs Lynne Barber claimed last week, Josiah Laurie of the old Jermyn Street tailoring firm Fry and Laurie. The first braces were actually made of wood and were introduced in the mid-4th century as standard wear for Roman legionnaires, to hold up the heavily armoured under-breeches (or "pantini"). These were known as *braccae*, literally "little trees", and a perfectly preserved example, excavated at the Roman villa of Fishwick, Derbyshire, can be seen in the Buxton Folk Museum. — *C. Hawtree, Brighton.*

**QUESTION: What is the world's smallest fish?**

☐ Sir D. Attenbore writes: When I was filming in Java in 1984 for my series *Earthwatch '84*, we were lucky to catch a glimpse of the Two-Finned Golden Bonsai Dwarf Fish, which is only 0.0001mm long and cannot be seen by the naked eye. Traditionally regarded as a powerful aphrodisiac by the native Attallah islanders, the dwarf fish is unhappily now extinct, as it requires 6 million of them to cover a small plate. Probably the smallest extant fish is the Brazilian Guppy, now in gaol on fraud charges *(see Spectator passim).*

NEXT WEEK: Answers please for the following: Is it true that the Chinese invented tube trains in the 8th century? Can bees swim? Why do we "wave" goodbye? Why does anyone employ David Mellor?

## NEW SLIMLINE THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

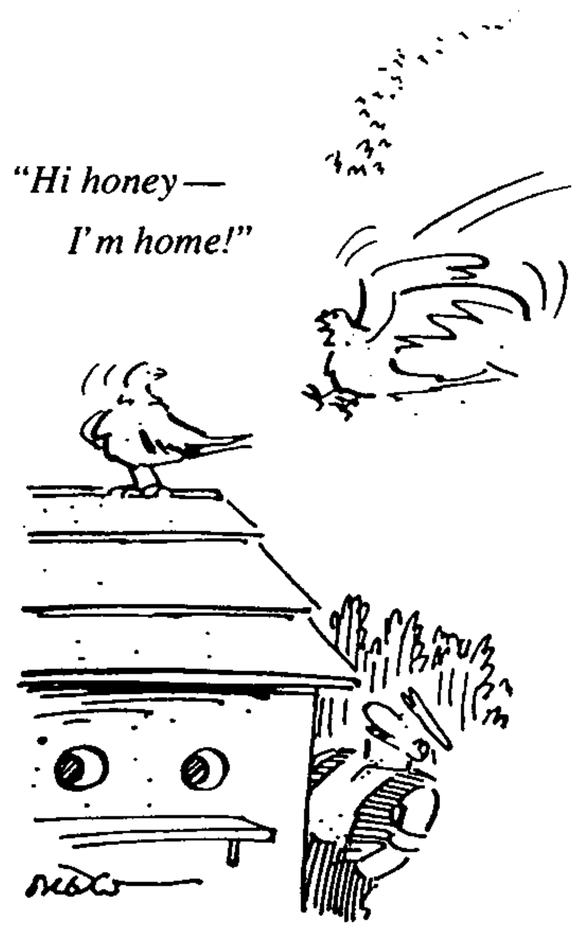
### How it will be

**Rabbi Bluejoke:** Hullo Brian, hullo Sue. Goodbye Brian, goodbye Sue.

**B. Redhead:** And now a look ahead to the new *Gardeners' Question Time*, chaired by Julie Burchill.

**Burchill:** *Gardener's Question Time* comes to you live from the Groucho Club in the heart of London's Soho. On the panel are Carmen Calil, Emma Freud, Francine Stock and somebody else who doesn't know anything about gardening either. And some of your questions they'll be answering — "Where do they do the best cappuccino in Soho?", "Is Grunge coming or going?" and "Should the age of homosexual consent be lowered to 15?" That's all in this week's *Gardeners' Question Time* at its new time of midnight. Ciao.

**James Naughtie** *(for it is he):* Hullo there *(continued on Long Wave's exciting new 24-hour roll-your-own news programme Nott Only — Birt Also, featuring the late Sir John Nott and the BBC's own John Birt, by kind permission of Birt Productions Ltd).*



# MAJOR HAILS EDUCATION TRIUMPH AS 'A' LEVEL PASSES BREAK RECORD

by Our Education Staff **Lunchtime O'Level**

**MILLIONS of delirious teenagers will today be shown on TV whooping with delight as they hear that they have passed their 'A' levels with flying colours.**

The pass-rate for 1993 is predicted to be its highest ever. No fewer than 100 per cent of all candidates taking A levels this year are expected to gain distinctions in all subjects.

This was hailed by the Prime Minister last night as proof that his education reforms are working and that Britain's youngsters are now cleverer than those in Japan, Germany or America.

## Sample 'A' Level papers for 1993

### Mathematics

**1.** Fill in the missing numbers:
1, 2, —, 4, 5, —, 7.

**2.** If a Nintendo Game Boy can be purchased for £50, how much change do you get for a £50 note?

### Sociology

**1.** If everyone passes their 'A' levels, and there are not enough places for them at university, what are they going to do after leaving school?

(a) Go on the dole.
(b) Become New Age travellers.
(c) Become Conservative MPs.

### Politics and Economics

**1.** If everyone passes their 'A' levels, won't this look terrific for:

(a) John Patten.
(b) John Major.
(c) The Conservative Government.

### English

**1.** What is your name?

*(Time allowed: 3 hours)*

## How they are **not** going to be related – Wedding of the Century called off

**That Bloke from U2**

Edward de Bono

Simon Le Bono

Yoko Bono

Napoleon Bonoparte

B-oh-no-it's-not-him-it's-the-other-bloke-from-U2

Non-U2

U-one-all your own

**Adam Ant**

**That Supermodel**

Kate Moss

Stirling Moss

Moss Bros

Moss Evans

Wrong-Naomi-it's-the-other-Supermodel

Don't Naomi the Day

Campbell's won't be ringing

**Glen Campbell**

# PETER McLIE'S WEAK

## The World's Worst Columnist*

At last the BBC have come up with an original new situation comedy. It is called The Good Life and goes out every Tuesday.

The idea is a simple one. A suburban couple are trying to go self-sufficient and grow their own vegetables.

Not only is it highly amusing. It is also splendidly topical for these eco-friendly '90s. One to watch indeed!

**What a nerve for Fergie to take a job as our ambassador at the United Nations.**

**Whatever next, I wonder. Perhaps we shall see Prince Charles starting his own TV series on wildlife.**

**Or will the Queen start letting the tourists into Buckingham Palace?**

**Isn't life dandy and grandy?**

* (except for Melanie Phillips)

My friend Andrew Wilson is going from strength to strength.

He tells me he has been abroad on holiday.

This is something that more and more people seem to be doing nowadays, especially in August.

I cannot say that it seems to have done him much good, however. He has come back looking a funny brown colour.

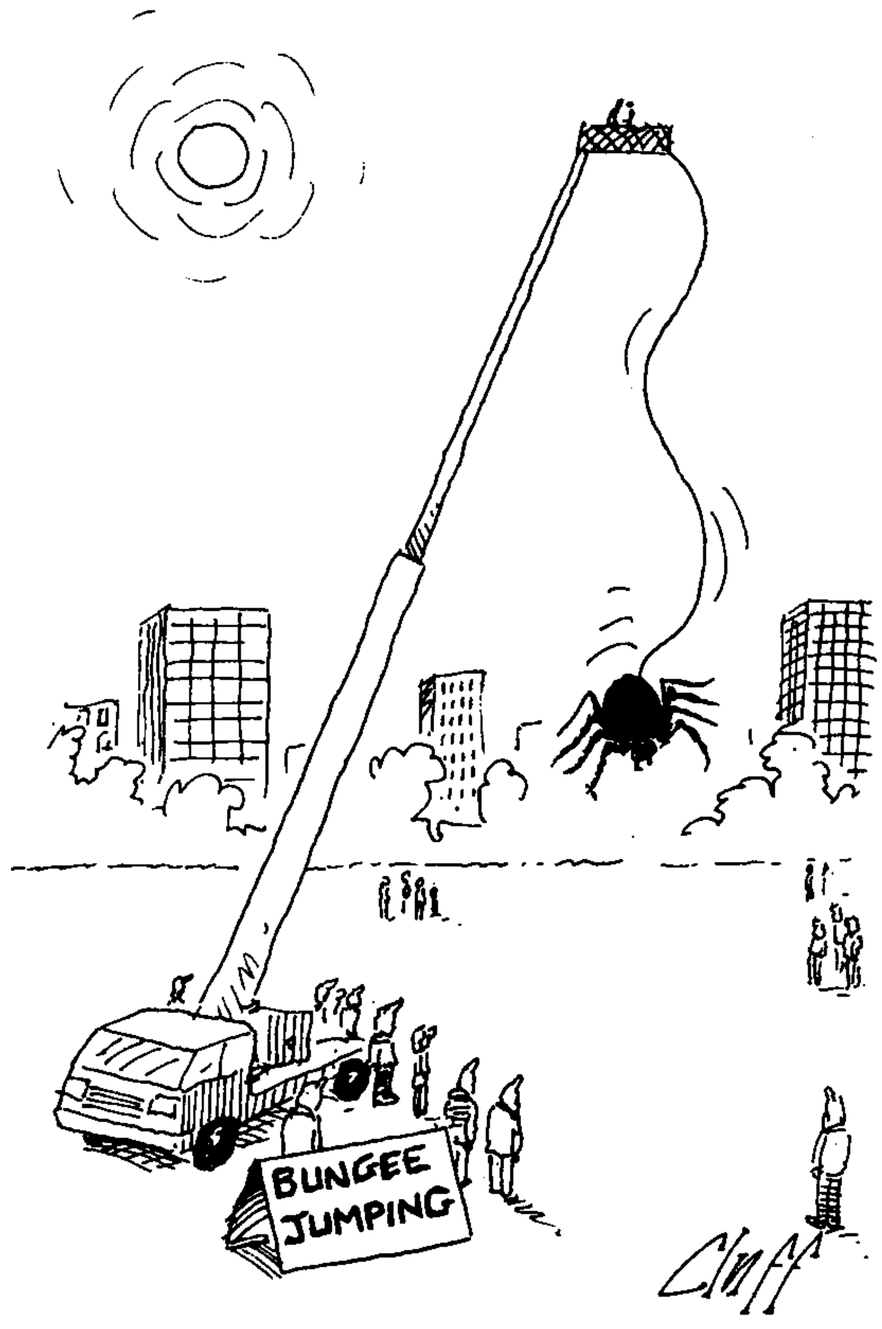
Why should this be? I think our health minister Mr Waldegrave should act immediately.

**I have often wondered what happens when your hair gets too long.**

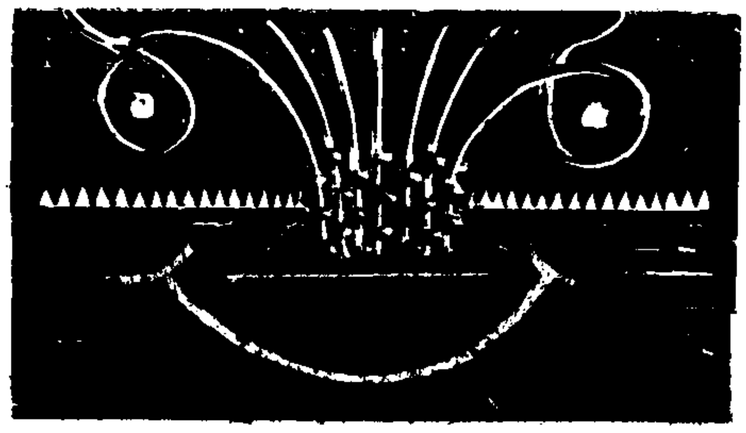
**I am told that nowadays you can go to a special establishment where a man with scissors will cut it off for you, in exchange for a few bawbees.**

**Another first for British technology! No wonder we are the envy of the world.**

*(Peter McKay is on holiday)*



# DIARY



GILES GORDON

Writers spend a fair whack of their time writing. But that need not mean that they have no time for anything else.

I am lucky to count among my acquaintance many an illustrious pen-pusher, and delight in offering readers of this oft-scurrilous periodical a few choice — if occasionally wicked! — vignettes of literary folk. For instance, I used to employ the same bookshop — I am, perforce, an inveterate reader — as the ineffably hirsute Sir Bill Golding. Coincidentally, our bookseller once told me on a Thursday morning that Golding had been there the previous Tuesday lunchtime — which meant that our paths would have crossed had I arrived a little over 48 hours earlier, which I could easily have done, and we might then easily have exchanged news and views on the international book scene for many a delightful hour, the redoubtable Golding finally agreeing to treat me to a first-class repast — but alas it was not to be!

Can one possibly imagine a world without books? Frankly, it wouldn't be the same at all.

Sticking my neck out — and I am not unknown for my rebelliousness! — I would say that Will Shakespeare, that most immortal of bards, is, in my humble opinion, one of this sceptr'd isle's greatest playwrights, a fine craftsman, a splendid spinner of yarns and a most redoubtable all round Good Fellow to boot.

His credentials as poet and dramatist are absolutely top-notch, with numerous productions to his credit worldwide, and all his works still in print at the time of writing.

And it is, methinks, of the Swan of Avon that herein I wish thenceforth to speak. It may indeed be a shortcoming in me, but I derive more from even a poor performance of that most palatable of playwrights than I do from sitting in my study twiddling my thumbs, and o'er the years I have discovered one or two things about that estimable scrivener that I am now happy to impart. 1) The better you know your Shakespeare, the richer the plays seem. 2) His way with words is nothing short of remarkable, and his use of language is equally first-rate, as is his ability to create memorable speeches, and his poetic use of tremendously varied sentences. 3) To my mind, he can make his characters really "come alive" on the stage, and one can sit watching his plays for minutes, even hours. Immortal Bard, I salute thee.

What would life be without travel? Much diminished.

O'er the course of my first fifty or so years, I have noticed that the world is made up of lots of different sorts of people. In my opinion — and you may detect my "novelist's eye" here! — no two people are ever quite the same. They look different, and often speak and behave differently too.

As a literary agent, I have been privileged to count many members of the Royal Family among my clients. With my satirist's eye, I have oft noticed the sycophancy with which they are greeted by those with whom they come into contact. How fed up they must get with all that bowing and scraping, and all those false compliments!

This is, I think, why they find my own particular Gordonesque brand of courteous irreverence so very refreshing! They know that — being of somewhat socialist inclinations, and with a highly developed (I fear some might say OVER-developed!) sense of humour — I have no truck with snobbery, and they respect me for it.

For instance, I remember well His Royal Highness The Duke of York — a most affable fellow and, incidentally, one of our most promising young photographers — approaching me at a literary reception of which I had, most gratifyingly, recently been appointed — to my astonishment! — Regional Assistant Secretary to the Deputy Vice-Chairman. Frankly, the Duke likes to be treated as an ordinary bloke, and that is probably why he made a bee-line for me. Straightaway, he seemed to relax in my presence, and, after gently bidding me to rise from my knees, he said, "Could you please move, I'm trying to get past". To which I retorted, quick as a flash, "Yes, Sir, certainly, Sir" — and executed a hasty step sideways! His Royal Highness obviously appreciated my gesture, as, though we haven't had any contact following that spirited badinage, I like to think we have remained firm friends ever since.

What would we do without places to go? Life would certainly lack variety if we simply had to stay put.

I never neglect to experience a *frisson* of delight whensoe'er I perambulate through the hallowed portals of the Garrick Club, of which venerable institution I count myself lucky to be a member.

Garrick stories are legion, if only because so many members are the most beguiling of storytellers, and the most amusing — if irreverent! — of companions. I will never forget Sir Kingsley Amis, sitting plumply at the Members' table, a large plate of steak-and-kidney pud set before him, to be washed down with a bottle of vintage claret, bib-and-tucker at the ready.

I approached the celebrated mirth-maker, and, with a smile playing on my lips, quipped: "That's a lot of steak-and-kidney pud for one person — I trust, Kingsley, that you are not thinking of partaking of a dessert!"

To which the great man replied, with characteristic ebullience: "Fuck off, you stupid prat!"

Priceless! Needless to say, I've been dining out on this tale ever since, and no doubt Amis *père* has too!

Let me briefly praise painters in general, and great painters in particular. They have certainly given us some memorable paintings down the centuries, and I am delighted to avail myself of this opportunity to salute them for it.

Finally, a few wry thumbnail sketches of The Great and the Good from my long-awaited autobiography *Haven't We Remaindered It Yet?* (Chatto, £16.99).

Richard Ingrams: "A man of contrasts". Lord Goodman: "Undoubtedly, one of our leading lawyers". Auberon Waugh: "A man of contrasts". Martin Amis: "Son of the redoubtable Kingsley". Günter Grass: "Very German". H.M. The Queen: "Every inch a Royal". Salman Rushdie: "Under a great deal of pressure". Fay Weldon: "Prolific isn't the word for her". Iris Murdoch: "A woman of contrasts". Yukio Mishima: "More English than the English". John Mortimer: "Creator of the immortal Rumpole". Anthony Burgess: "By and large, a man of contrasts".

And what of me, Giles Gordon? I sincerely hope that I am not becoming, as my second half century begins to fast-forward, too respectable or respectful — but I think there is little likelihood of that.

*"I know, we'll have a barbecue, then it'll rain"*

The Scout Association

**PERSONAL SECRETARY TO EXECUTE COMMISSIONER (PROGRAMME AND TRAINING)**

GILWELL PARK, CHINGFORD

*Grauniad*

Granta is an equal opportunities employer and positively welcomes applications from all sections of the community. The Society operates a no smiling policy in its offices.

*Granta Housing Ass. advertisement, Cambridge Evening Press*

# Literary Review

## Withering hype

AUTUMN in the world of books invariably has a depressing ring of familiarity: factitious excitement about the Booker Prize; columns of po-faced exegesis on live-wire topics such as "Whither the Novel?"; the third and fourth recapitulations of other people's good ideas; and lurking away in the depths of this grey, gloomy pool, careless of the splashings of excitable smaller fry, the big fish, the Clancys, the Eddingses and the Deightons, whom there is some commercial point in publishing.

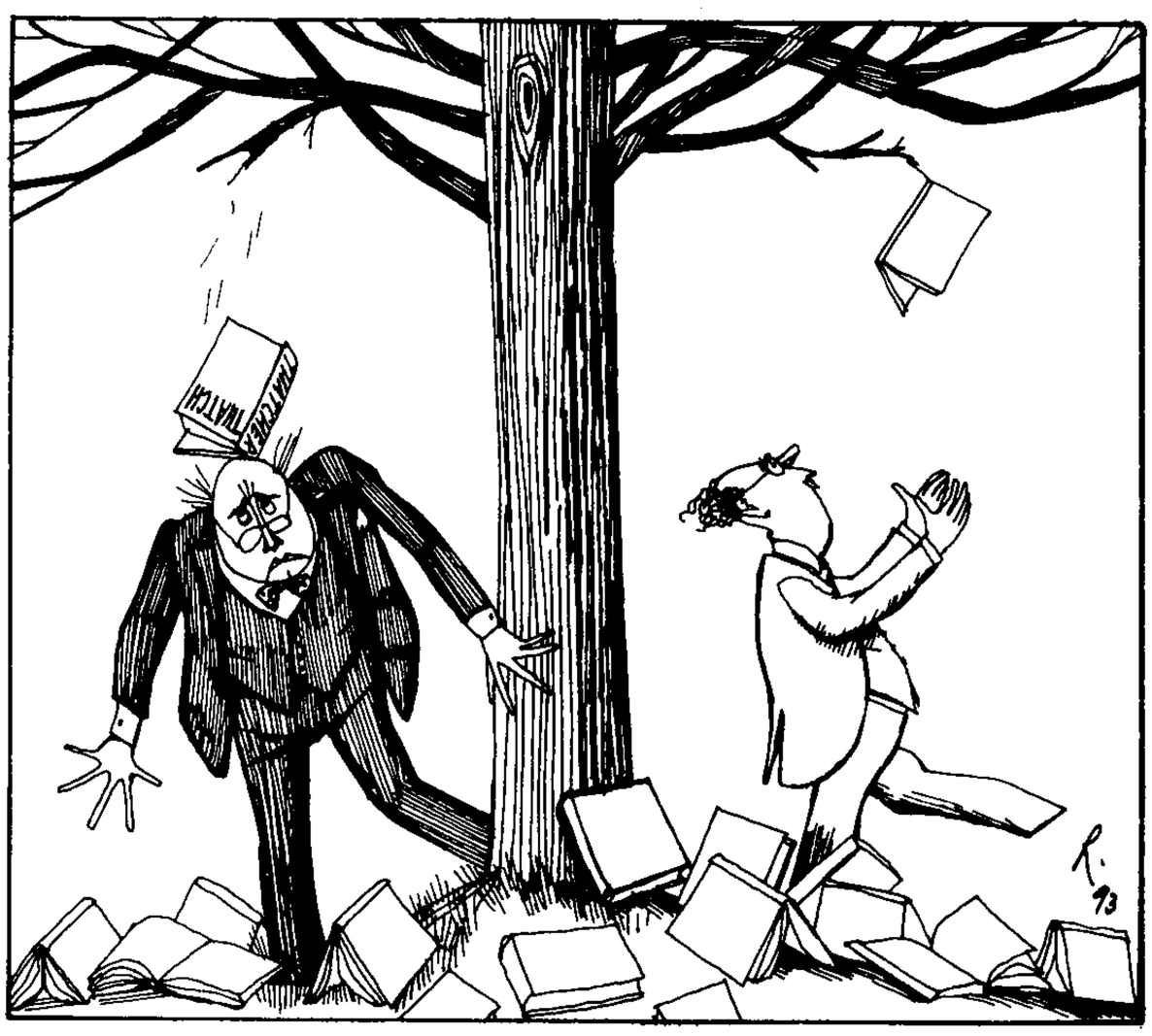
For 1993, repeat the mixture as before. The Booker circus starts even earlier this year, with this season's literary contenders — Murdoch, Ackroyd, Boyd — upon us by the end of August. The smart money is already on the Indian writer Upamanyu Chatterjee (*The Last Burden*, Faber) who shares with Vikram Seth the inestimable advantage of being foreign, but beats him hands down when it comes to over-writing. Never mind, if the book can be said to follow all the prescriptions with which 'Bookworm' flagged Michael Ondaatje's victory last year (foreign, funny name, "poetic" prose style and so on) then this is it.

The "Whither the Novel?" chatter, too, can be expected to roll on until at least November. Not only are various deeply serious young writers standing by to inform us once again that the novel is dead (has the *Guardian* books page no other *raison d'etre*?), but they will be joined by a serious older man, in this case Malcolm Bradbury, whose compendious *The Modern British Novel* comes from Secker. Even worse, to mark the 25th anniversary of the Booker, there will be a "Booker of Bookers" event to add to the existing party, and no *Late Show* discussion worth its salt will be free from its enveloping tentacles.

Publishing, it will perhaps come as a surprise to learn, is about good ideas, or, rather, the amount of repetition that good ideas will bear before they become bad ideas. Remember Jung Chang's *Wild Swans*? Well, somebody at Gollancz clearly thinks this one will run and run: stand by for *Red Azaleas* by Anchee Min, billed in that catchpenny way so beloved of book publicists as "the most powerfully erotic and moving autobiography to emerge from modern China". Elsewhere, the scent of *déjà vu* hangs heavy. Philip Ziegler's biography of Harold Wilson would look more exciting if we hadn't had a first instalment (if a rather more sycophantic one) last year from Ben Pimlott. Similarly, Sean French's life of the endlessly under-rated English novelist Patrick Hamilton (Faber) would be that much more alluring had not Nigel Jones got in first back in 1991.

Other bandwagons will be less easily derailed. Gollancz, again, have had the very bright idea of getting Nick Hornby (*Fever Pitch*) to put his name to a collection of essays by a gaggle of thirtysomething wannabes maundering about their obsession with soccer (*My Favourite Year*) — expect acres of coverage from media chums. Another minority interest suddenly having money thrown at it is the gay market, most obviously in the launch of Cassell's "Sexual Politics" list. Early offerings include Mark Simpson's *Male Impersonators* ("examines... whether male body-builders are covert transsexuals, football matches are one vast 'circle jerk', and how gay men play with manliness as a kind of drag") and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence's (*Who they? — Ed.*) safer-sex postcard book *Get the Rubber Habit*, a shocking comment on the business sense of a fine old English firm.

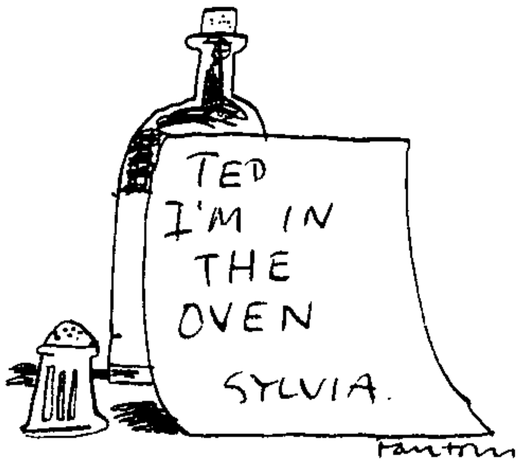
Will any of the above actually sell? Answer: no. And what will sell, then? Answer: Tom Clancy's *Without Remorse*, Len Deighton's *Violent Ward*, and a dozen other stodgy transatlantic techno-thrillers. Oh, and the initial print-run for volume one of Mrs Thatcher's memoirs (*The Downing Street Years*, HarperCollins) — the autumn's best-selling book — is a cool 200,000.



## Books & Bookmen

■ **YOU might have thought that the Reed Consumer Group, incorporating Heinemann, Methuen, Secker & Warburg and Mandarin, have no editors these days, particularly since Dan Franklin and Robin Robertson defected to Random House's Jonathan Cape. This cannot be true as publisher Helen Fraser has recently sent the following "private and confidential memo" to most remaining editors in Michelin House:**

**"There is a feeling that editors are slightly 9-5ing (or 9.30ing to 5.30ing) at the moment, and that our conspicuous position in the middle**




**of the fourth floor makes it rather obvious if no one is here at 9.25 or 5.30.**

**"I'm absolutely not an advocate of ludicrously long hours, and I know how many hours all of us spend working at home, but it would help me greatly if we can have a greater editorial presence on the 4th floor between 9 and 6."**

**The memo was not sent to Sir Sincere-Stevenson, who presumably is allowed to keep his own hours.**

■ HAVING failed to dislodge the Net Book Agreement, Terry Maher ("We're unloved") and his Pentos Group have been looking for a new way of commanding column inches in the national press. Having himself sold 200,000 Pentos shares to pay a tax bill (what can that have been about?), Maher had to suffer the indignity of NatWest Securities advising shareholders to sell.

Honour to some degree has been retrieved by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) having awarded the contract for its publications to Promotional Logistics (Prolog) Ltd, of which no one has heard, and Dillons Bookstores. Dillons and Ryman, the stationers who overcharge for most of their commodities, will later in the year become the only authorised retail outlets for HSE publications. Prolog will operate a mail order service.

"In tendering the contract, HSE's principal objectives were to reduce distribution costs and improve the marketing and targeting of their publications with a clear commitment to the "value for money" principle behind the government's financial management initiative, and the rules governing the award of contracts for public bodies," mumbles the press release ludicrously.

This, of course, is eyewash. Pentos will have a monopoly. Until October, HSE's publications will continue to be found at HMSO, their excellent and efficient bookshops, and through their agents which, mostly, are Britain's leading independent bookshops.

Come October, a mere 18 branches of Dillons will be stocking the books in depth. The other Dillons shops and Ryman branches will act principally as order points, but you will not be able to examine the publications. Until now, citizens have been able to order the various Bills, Acts, Command Papers and other parliamentary publications from 38 specialist agents and 3,000 other bookshops.

Worst of all, the Treasury and/or taxpayers will have to pick up the tab for this latest Major adventure into non-commercialism, for HMSO will have to load all its costs by 50% less throughput, as Pentos will receive a much higher discount than did all the previous stockholders.

*'Bookworm'*

# footnotes

# THE STRANGE CASE OF INVESTOR MORSE

MR GERALD MORSE has a strange story to tell about flamboyant former Minister Alan Clark. The story does not appear in Mr Clark's recent best-selling and much-acclaimed diaries.

Mr Morse says he first made contact with Mr Clark in 1984 when Clark was a junior Minister and Morse was a registered stock exchange trader.

Morse, who speaks three languages and knows his way round the US and European stock markets, advertised his investing skills in a mail shot to every entry in *Who's Who*. One of the replies he got was from Alan Clark who, says Mr Morse, sent a vast cheque (over £100,000) plus instructions to invest it as he thought fit.

The two men then kept in regular contact, and discussed stock exchange trade. Morse says he traded many times on the Clark family's behalf to their considerable advantage. He remembers two deals in particular. The first, which he thinks was in 1986, was buying and selling shares in the burgeoning British arms company Astra. The second, in the spring of 1989, was in British American Tobacco. Both transactions, he recalls, secured substantial profits for his client, Alan Clark.

Clark was Parliamentary Under Secretary at the Department of Employment from 1983 to 1986, and Minister of State at the Department of Trade from 1986 and 1989. He was then moved to the Ministry of Defence, where he became Minister of State.

*BUST...Gerald Morse*

**THE CHANNEL ISLANDS ACCOUNT**

On 23 November 1989 Clark wrote to Morse authorising him "to apply the balance (on my personal account) to dealings under account FINAN 0003". This account was with FMI, a firm in the Channel Islands. Any dealings in this account, wrote Clark, "are to be undertaken without advice or consultation with me and that they should exclude all companies with broad defence connections. I would, of course, expect periodic evaluations".

What Clark didn't know was that the Channel Islands account was already in deficit to the tune of £53,000.

A partner in Morse's firm, Charlton Seal Schaverein, which has since gone into receivership, tipped off the Stock Exchange. The Securities Association, then the regulatory body for the Stock Exchange, set up a disciplinary tribunal. On 16 August 1990 Mr Morse was interviewed at length by two TSA investigators, Charles Poyser and Michael John. Morse insisted that he had had authority from Clark to deal in the Channel islands account, and the £53,000 deficit was because of trading losses and a dip in the stock market.

Clark told the investigators he had been "ripped off". He said he had no idea of the deficit on the account or of the state of the Channel Islands account; and that if he had known about it he would never have authorised Morse to deal with it. The investigators reported:

"For a number of years Alan Clark MP maintained a dealing account at Charlton Seal Schaverien (a firm of stockbrokers which has since gone into receivership). His dealings were on an advisory basis and he was categorised by CSS as an expert investor. The account was handled by Mr Morse but he had no authority to deal without prior consultation with Mr Clark. The two remained in regular contact".

The report went on: "By the end of October 1989, Mr Morse was looking to the further commissions he could earn to extricate himself from his difficulties in his personal account. Furthermore he had been forbidden to conduct further personal transactions. It was about this time that the account FINAN 0003 with FMI again became active at Mr Morse's instigation. The tribunal is satisfied on the evidence that whatever was the position when it was opened, Mr Morse was now using the account as a vehicle for his own dealings."

It took nearly a year for the regulatory body, which had changed its name to the Securities and Futures Authority, to come to a decision. On 13 June 1991, SFA Secretary Bill Nixon issued a press statement. Gerald Morse had been fined £75,000 and found "unfit and improper to be admitted to any of the SFA's registers": effectively banned for life from the Stock Exchange. He had been found guilty of "four acts of misconduct" -- all connected with the funds of a "discretionary customer". The media paid little attention of this announcement since the identity of the discretionary customer -- The Rt Hon Alan Clark MP, Minister for Defence Procurement -- was kept firmly secret.

**THE SUN ALSO SETS**

Mr Morse first heard of the decision when he was flung out of the firm he was working for in Germany. He drifted from firm to firm, only to be ejected as soon as the SFA decision became known to his employers. In early 1992, he was approached by a European journalist about the disciplinary inquiry. In some panic, he says, he faxed Clark at the House of Commons asking what he should disclose. A few days later, Clark announced his decision not to stand for Parliament in the 1992 General Election.

Increasingly rejected, Morse wandered round Europe. Early in 1993, he came to London. In a bar off Sloane Street he suddenly poured out his story to a fellow-drinker, a Canadian insurance man. The insurance man directed him to a Mayfair detective agency which introduced him to Mike Ridley of the *Sun* newspaper. Almost at once, Morse was whisked off to a hotel near Amsterdam where he stayed for 90 days at the expense of News International. Morse says he was told News International papers, the *Sun* and the *Sunday Times*, would break his story, and pay for it. But after three months in which nothing happened (though the bills kept being paid) Morse grew worried, and rang Ridley. The *Sun*, he was told, had dropped the story. Morse went to the *Mirror*, with whom he signed a confidentiality agreement. Still, there was no decision about his story -- and no money for it either.

**ENTER (AND EXIT) LORD JUSTICE SCOTT**

Morse then approached the Scott inquiry into the sale of arms to Iraq. He was interviewed in private by Lord Justice Scott and the other two members of his team, Presiley Baxendale QC and Christopher Muttukumaru.

Mr Muttukumaru's note of the meeting reported:

"Several years ago, (Mr Morse could not recall exactly when but thought it was about 1985-86) Mr Clark had opened an account with Schaverien for whom Mr Morse then worked. The account, which initially had a value of £100,000, was for one of Mr Clark's friends, Valerie Harkess, who lived in Cape Town, South Africa."

The report said that Morse had identified one share transaction through this account -- the buying and selling of shares in an arms company, Astra, in 1985 or 1986.

Mr Gerald James, chairman of Astra 1981-1989, recalls Clark *inging him from the Department* on more than one occasion. "He said he was a military historian," James tells the *Eye*. "He said he'd heard a lot of good things about Astra and wanted to come and

*FLUSH...Alan Clark*

see for himself. He did this more than once, though he never came".

In a letter to Morse on 2 July Mr Muttukumaru wrote: "Lord Justice Scott has concluded that the evidence you can indicate you can provide relating to Mr Clark's share dealings does not fall within his terms of reference. He will not therefore be pursuing the matter".

What are we to make of Morse's story? There is no doubt that the authorities found Morse guilty of using Clark's account for his own purposes and breaking the rules. Such a witness is obviously suspect. On the other hand the investigators established that Clark, while a Minister, continued to trade in stocks and shares through Morse.

The Cabinet Office guidelines about Ministers' personal share dealings are vague.

Paragraph 109 says: "Ministers cannot be expected, on taking up office, to dispose of all the investments they hold".

Paragraph 112 says: "Ministers should also ensure that, while they are in office, they do not acquire any investments which seem likely to give rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest."

**THE SIX QUESTIONS**

The *Eye* sent the following questions to Alan Clark's castle home in Kent by fax last Thursday, August 19:

1) When were you first in contact with Mr Morse?

2) When did he start to trade in stocks and shares on your behalf or on behalf of your nominees, family or introductions?

3) Did you instruct him to buy and sell shares in the British arms company Astra on behalf of a Mrs Valerie Harkess?

4) Did the transactions which Mr Morse effected on your behalf include the buying and selling of shares in British American Tobacco?

5) Do you think that any Stock Exchange transactions effected on your behalf by Mr Morse conflicted or might have conflicted with your duties as a Minister?

6) Did any of these deals and the difficulties Mr Morse encountered with them have anything to do with your decision not to stand for Parliament in the 1992 General Election?

The *Eye* columns are open for any reply.

# Sweet Charity

THE Department of Education is getting increasingly worried about the lack of good private enterprise money to finance its beloved City Technology Colleges.

The CTC at Gateshead is a good example. The private enterprise contribution never reached anything like what was expected.

The biggest contribution by far was £300,000 from the Laing Charitable Trust, which was set up by Laings, the big building contractors.

Laings the builders won the £6 million tender to build Gateshead CTC.

I asked Laings whether they thought there might have been a conflict of interest from their role as sponsors and builders of the CTC.

A company spokeswoman told the *Eye*: "No, there wasn't a conflict of interest because the selection process was carried out independently from the sponsors. Tenders were considered by two panels, made up of building and educational professionals, and none of these had any connection with the company. Both panels recommended that the Laing tender be accepted because they thought it represented the best design and value."

**PS.** Laings is the most consistent big contributor to the Tory Party.

## *TODAY IN PARLIAMENT*

**Mr. Cormack:** Can the right hon. Gentleman tell me how much tripe has been served during the past year?

**Mr Beith:** Not without notice.

*July 26*

# SHAKING STEVENS

*John Stevens*

*Hugh Annesley*

■ FOR the first time in known history there are two police inquiries into the same subject in the North and South of Ireland. In the South, a special Gardai squad has been appointed to investigate the claim on Yorkshire TV's *First Tuesday* that the worst atrocity since the war -- the kiling of 33 people by terrorist bombs in Dublin and other Southern towns in 1974 -- was carried out by Protestant paramilitaries armed and equipped by the SAS and MI5.

In the North, the RUC have called back John Stevens who, as deputy chief constable of Cambridgeshire, investigated the links between the army and Protestant paramilitaries three years ago. The Stevens inquiry led to the arrest and conviction on conspiracy charges of Brian Nelson, "intelligence officer" of the paramilitary UDA who, like his predecessor James Miller who masterminded the Ulster Workers strike in 1974, turned out to be an agent of British army intelligence.

Stevens is being called back to investigate Brian Nelson's role in equipping the Protestant ultras with arms for South Africa, exposed constantly in *Private Eye* over the last two years. Nelson may not co-operate with Stevens -- he regards his arrest and imprisonment as a result of the rivalry between the RUC and the army. But if he does, the retiring chief constable, Hugh Annesley, (who is bitterly disappointed not to have been made Metropolitan Commissioner) may have to make some very important arrests indeed.

# HUNT BALL

**■ WHAT a wonderful year it's been for Derek Hunt, chairman of the furniture group MFI. Last year he had to scrape along on a salary of £232,000, which is not even up to the standard chairman's rate of £1,000 a working day.**

**That's been put right with an increase of £39,000 -- to £271,000. But this year Mr Hunt enjoys a "management bonus" of £1,300,000, plus a "performance-related bonus" of £63,000, bringing his total "emoluments" to £1,634,000, a 604 per cent increase on last year.**

**This spirit of generosity has infected the whole MFI board. Last year not a single director got more than £235,000 a year. Now there are eight directors who get more than a million.**

**Can any of these increases be attributed to the overall successes of MFI last year? Apparently not. Mr Hunt says in his annual statement:**

**"In view of the profit performance and the outlook for the future, it was decided in April 1993 that a nil pay award would be appropriate for the coming year. Despite this fact, staff morale remains at a high level and I would like to thank the staff for their hard work during this period of considerable change."**

**These gracious remarks have not been well received by an irresponsible minority of staff. For instance, the carpenter who sent the MFI annual report to the *Eye* has scribbled the initials "YFB" all over Mr Hunt's glamorous picture.**

**If these initials stand for "You Fat Bastard", they are unhelpful during this period of considerable change, and disturbing proof that the language of the common people is descending to that of the Prime Minister.**

# In the City

WHO IS THE "senior government Minister" suspended tax investigator Michael Allcock had such an abiding interest in but was not prepared to name during his TV interview? One name which receives more than an occasional mention among those who have been in contact with Allcock is none other than the recuperating Trade Secretary Michael Heseltine.

But why Allcock should have any reason to be interested in the tax affairs of "President" Heseltine and his private companies is hard to imagine as they have only ever been carried out with the utmost propriety and in accordance with the laws governing tax avoidance.

Allcock's *World in Action* appearance raised the stakes in his clever counter-offensive against the corruption investigation into his activities by the Inland Revenue and Scotland Yard. He is forcing the Crown Prosecution Service to weigh up the relative advantages of avoiding embarrassment by taking no criminal action, and leaving Allcock to be dealt with by internal Revenue procedures, against risking defeat in a high-profile prosecution where witnesses may be few and the defendant will cast himself in the role of hero victim.

HANSON'S struggles with the problems of recession, succession and opposition (in the form of striking US miners) are taking place increasingly without the same contribution as in the past of its co-founder "Lord" White.

Friends say the septuagenarian "Slugger", who is seen less and less frequently in London, is showing much more interest in his personal life and his new home in California with the lovely Victoria than Hanson's efforts to prove that it will be the force in the Nineties that it was in the Eighties.

Health problems and a reported sense of "been there, done that" are said to have contributed to a lack of involvement on White's part, leaving it to his partner "Lord" Hanson and his crew of relatives, friends of relatives and apparatchiks to plan for the future. Whether Hanson minus White will prove as successful as Hanson plus White remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, Hanson himself is said to be almost as concerned with discouraging those who know him from assisting in an unauthorised biography as in planning the rumoured next big deal.

Letters have been sent out to likely targets of author Nick Kochan, strongly advising silence because the book does not have the approval of the egotistical Hanson — who is eager to tell the world in his own words of his many wonderful, wealth-creating deeds that have benefitted mankind. It is doubtful, therefore, if certain less altruistic deeds involving Lord "Prim" and his nearest and dearest are likely to find their way into either book.

NOBODY WILL be more justifiably gratified, if unsurprised, than Lord (Jacob) Rothschild that the routine Stock Exchange investigation into purchases of Great Universal Stores ordinary shares by his St James's Place Capital has cleared the group of any suggestion of impropriety, never mind insider dealing.

St James's raised its holding in the months ahead of the July decision to enfranchise the "A" shares in return for substantial compensation to holders of the ordinary. The ordinary shares had been rising ahead of this news.

Any ill-informed and unjustified suggestions about the timing of these dealings could be needlessly embarrassing given the purely coincidental fact that his business associate, Gilbert de Botton, is married to the eldest daughter of GUS chairman Lord Wolfson, and St James's Place Capital is a major shareholder in de Botton's Global Asset Management. Clearly, Lord Wolfson's decision was as much a surprise to his family as it was to outsiders and the purchases of GUS shares made by St James's Place Capital were part of a long-term plan based on no inside information whatsoever and were never the subject of discussion with de Botton.

READERS OF the soon to be not *Independent* at all who have chosen to follow its tainted tipster "Changi Jim" Slater should prepare themselves for bad news. Slater has sold at least two and possibly three of his nine share tips, but without so far disclosing that relevant fact to his faithful followers.

Slater's August 12 column consisted of a lecture on "cutting losses". Because Slater agreed not to deal within six weeks of writing about a share — which would mean not writing until six weeks after selling — he informed readers opaquely: "I cannot write about two shares in the portfolio."

But he did write about healthcare company Tepnel Diagnostics, which he tipped in April when it was 229p and immediately rose to 245p. The shares are now 154p, a fall of at least 33%. It seems most unlikely "Changi Jim" is still in, although he did not say so directly.

Nor is it likely that he is still in the unmentioned computer software group, Sage, which has turned out to be almost as big a turkey. Picked at 567p in March, the shares immediately went to 601p. They are now 414p having been 385p after news last month of an unexpected downgrading in profits for this year. Sage shows a minimum loss of 27%. This at a time when the stock market has been hitting new highs.

Another share which did not merit a name check was British Data Management which, while not showing a loss, has failed to excite. The shares are up from 223p, 232.5p after the tip, to 245p, a rise of at best 10% since May. Also omitted were Slater's two Hong Kong picks.

Tepnel and Sage have ensured that Slater's seven UK shares have on average done little better than the stock market since February, when the self-proclaimed guru came aboard the sinking daily. Some guru!

All of which suggests that Slater fans on the *Independent*, if there are any other than besieged editor Andreas Whittam Smith and business editor Christopher Huhne, will soon learn that they are still in but Jim, without a word, is out. But then that was always likely to happen with an "active investor".

MOST INVESTORS would consider it a "material fact" that the second largest shareholder and co-promoter of a flotation seeking public funds was likely to sell out at the first profitable opportunity. Especially if the company was raising £9 million for a gold mine in the former Soviet Union.

Yet, somehow, neither the Stock Exchange nor the company's brokers Williams de Broe either knew, inquired or cared about the clear intentions of the New York company Chilewich regarding its 25% of Bakyrchik Gold. For within five days of the Bakyrchik flotation earlier this month, Chilewich had sold out at pennies above the 120p offer price. Such was the gold fever, before news leaked out that Wall Street guru George Soros had dumped his bullion horde, that the price still held its rise to 142p.

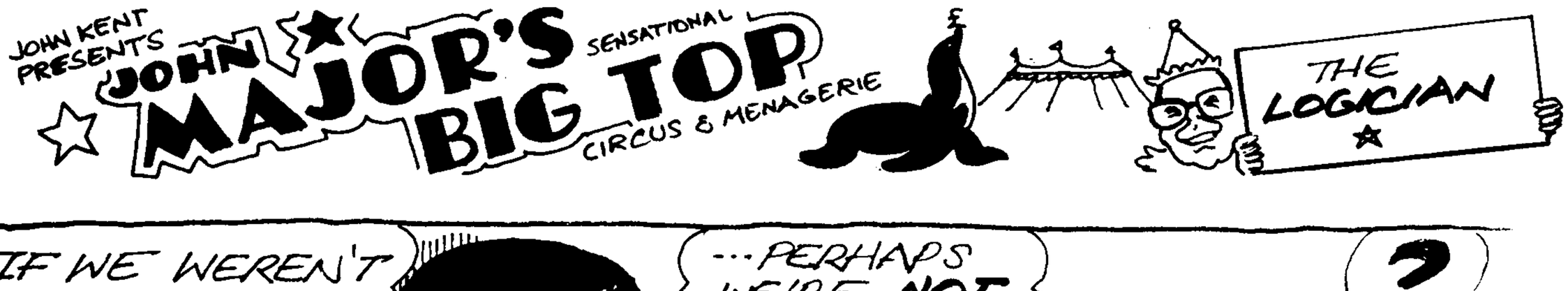
The slow motion explanation for the Chilewich sale — shurely shome mishtake if the Kazakhstan mine is a new El Dorado? — was that New Yorkers were under pressure from their bankers. Well, that was old news — except that no one bothered to tell the Bakyrchik investors by feeling it necessary to put in the prospectus the helpful information that Chilewich might have to sell.

Court records in New York reveal that back in November, a month after Chilewich signed the Bakyrchik deal in Kazakhstan, its president Simon Chilewich, two Chilewich companies and certain associates were sued by Internationale Nederlanden Bank over an unpaid $10 million loan. The court action was withdrawn in February. Subsequently, this year, civil actions have been launched against Chilewich, a veteran Russian trader, and his companies by IBJ Schroder Bank & Trust and two other companies.

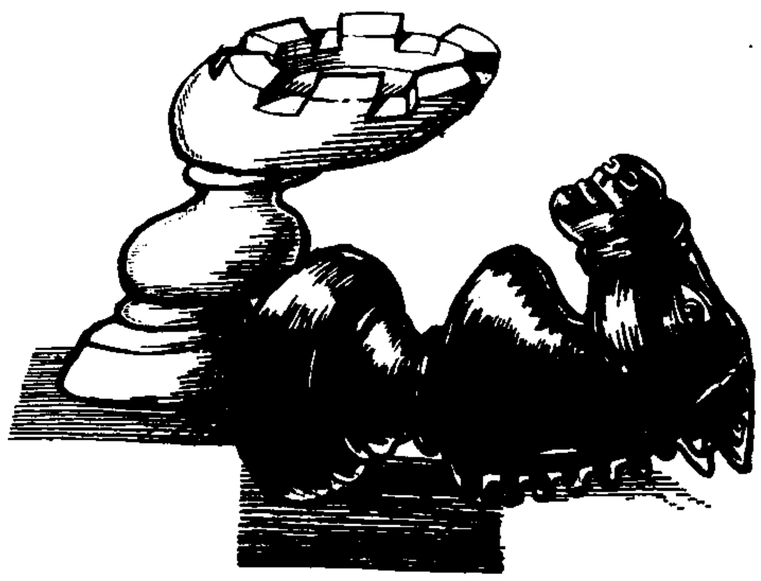
All of which makes you wonder why, if Bakyrchik is such a good thing, the banks could not wait? But then the flotation only raised less than 15% of the $100 million ultimate cost of the project.

Also, Chilewich would seem to have raised £3.8 million for an investment less than a year old, while its Australian partner Minproc is also already £1 million better off. And doing business in the politically unpredictable former Soviet Union means taking profits when you can.

***'Slicker'***



# Daily dispatches from the battlefront.



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**BAY-BAY. ROBBIE** Glendinning née Houston, 28/7/93 to Lorraine and Lloyd. Jealous? I certainly am. Congrats dahlings. Kisses, JONATHAN.

**KEN FOR TEN.**

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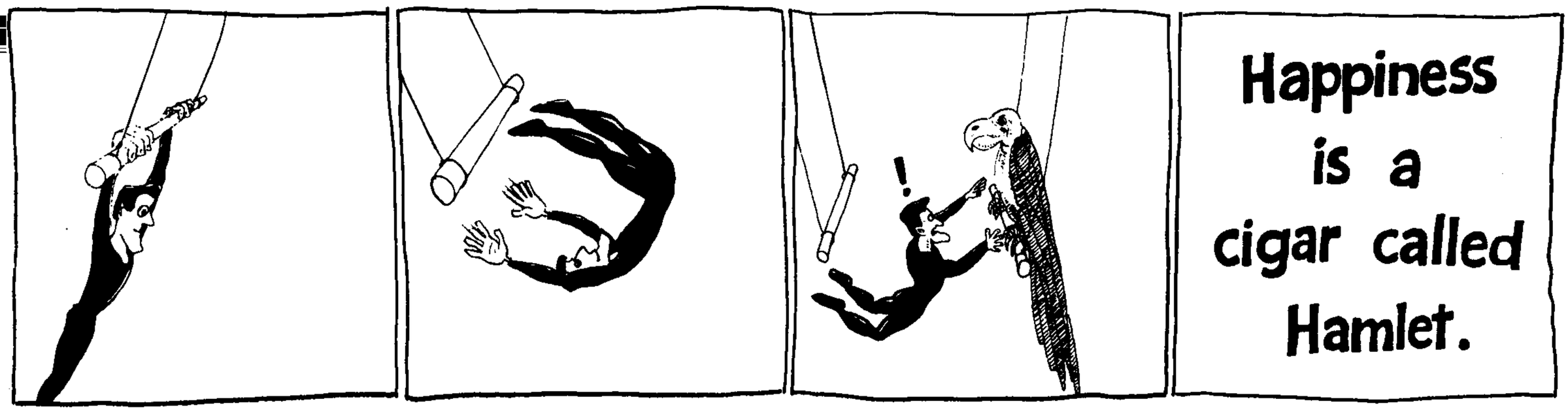

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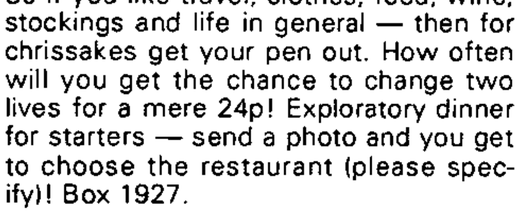


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**ATTRACTIVE SINGLE**
feminine intelligent female,
40, W1, desires
older very successful male
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relationship.
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**VERY ATTRACTIVE** extrovert professional buxom woman (30ish), seeks tall confident professional man for whatever happens. Box 11126.

**INTELLIGENT CREATIVE** male, mid-30s, married, seeks similar female for discreet, stimulating friendship, maybe more. Box 11226.

**SEX OVERRATED?** Fed up with idiots? Single 26 year old male wants intelligent, warm female correspondent. Break the circle! Box 11326.

**PROFESSIONAL GAMBLER** (20), shy, intelligent, poetic but very skinny, seeks beautiful lady to cash my chips and shower me with affection. London/SE. Box 11426.

**MIDLANDS PROFESSIONAL** man, 50, recently "redundant", seeks lady offering interesting new position. He's interested in most cultural and sporting activities including the good things in life. Long term contract a possibility. Box 11526.

**ATTRACTIVE GENTLEMAN,** 56, tied but unfulfilled, seeks similar lady for caring weekday relationship. London. Box 11626.

**TALL, SLIM,** pretty woman (31), who enjoys wit, sincerity and affection, seeks more than just a brief encounter. London. Box 11726.

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**ATTRACTIVE PROFESSIONAL** male, mid-thirties, tall, slim, seeks attractive, gregarious female for mental and physical seducation. Photo appreciated. Scotland. Box 12226.

**PROSPEROUS JEWISH** professional, 36, seeks slim attractive and witty lady 20-35 for fun, friendsnip and outings. W. Yorks. Box 12326.

**OXFORDSHIRE GENTLEMAN** seeks warm lady for afternoon dalliance. Box 12426.

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**KEEN ON JUGGLING,** sex and rock and roll, very attractive professional married woman (40) seeks similar man for joyful London based safe but steamy friendship. Photo appreciated, mine by return. Box 10726.

**ACADEMIC MALE,** 27, seeks female unhappy with twelve word personalities. Northwest. ALA. Box 10826.

**MALE ARTIST,** 45, wishes to meet wealthy patroness with a view to paint. Box 10926.

**REPLY ONLY IF** you are a discerning female (23 to 33) with stimulating personality, agile SoH, breathtaking looks and single (unlikely isn't it?) but possible because I am similar but male and 36, plus successful, fit, etc. — but like you still to meet my match! If this is you, send letter and photo and I will reply with same. Box 10026.

**BORING OLD PHART** (mid faulties) needs to be taken in hand by not-too-serious hand maiden. Sarfeast Londonish. Box 10126.

**MALE PROFESSIONAL,** n/s, married, "young" 50s, seeks n/s female to share adult fun meetings (not weekends). No fees. London/100 mi. Box 10226.

**MIDLANDS MAN,** 38, single, intelligent, slim, specs, balding, 5'82, seeks loving lady forever. Age unimportant. Box 8626.

**PROFESSIONAL MALE,** 40, slim, fit, presentable, cultural interests, seeks sensual educated woman 40/55 with a view to occasional meetings for pleasant conversation and mutually satisfactory physical liaisons. Rubenesque appearance a bonus but not essential. Box 8726.

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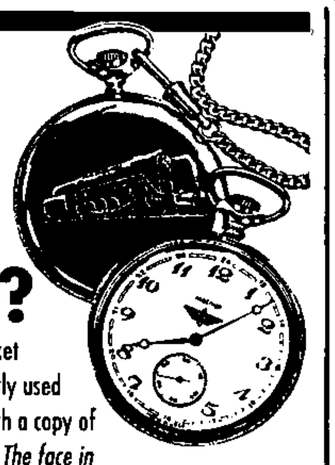

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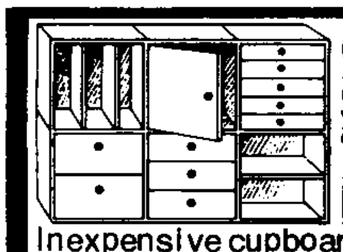

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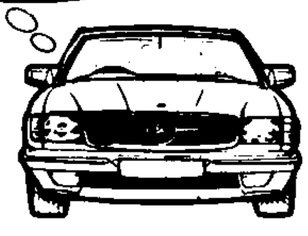

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